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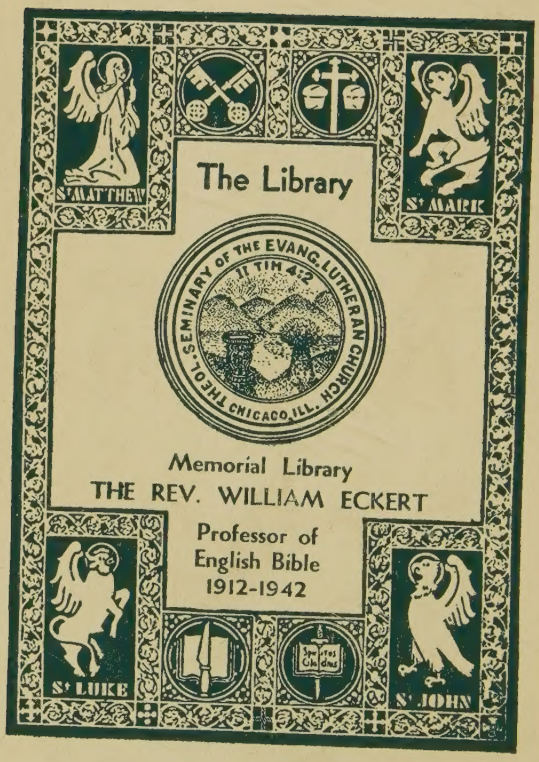
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The Life and Literature of the Ancient Hebrews

BY

LYMAN ABBOTT

33226

BOSTON AND NEW YORK
HOUGHTON, MIFFLIN AND COMPANY
The Riverside Press, Cambridge
1901

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PREFACE

It is less than half a century since the publication of "Essays and Reviews" startled the orthodox party in England and brought upon its authors a storm of criticism. Of those Essays perhaps none was more severely criticised than that of Dr. Frederick Temple, now Archbishop of Canterbury, on "The Education of the World," in which he affirmed that Rome, Greece, Asia, and Judea each contributed something to the growth of the future church; Rome, law; Greece, science and art; Asia, the spiritual imagination; Judea, the discipline of the human conscience; in which also he traced in the Bible a development of religious teaching, from an earlier and cruder to a later and better spiritual conception of truth and life. Some of his statements he would probably himself now modify; but the two fundamental principles of his essay, that God's processes of education have not been confined to the Hebrew race, and that in the Hebrew race they were gradual, the affirmation of which aroused such fierce antagonism in 1860, are accepted as axiomatic by a large and increasing body of Biblical scholars in

1900. This school of Biblical interpretation may be termed modern, because it has come into existence in England and America during the present century; it may be termed scientific, because in the study of the Bible it assumes nothing respecting the origin, character, and authority of the Bible, but expects to determine by such study what are its origin, character, and authority; it may be termed literary, because it applies to the study of Hebrew literature the same canons of literary criticism which are applied by students of other world-literature; it may be termed evolutionary, because it assumes that the laws, institutions, and literature of the ancient Hebrews were a gradual development in the life of the nation, not an instantaneous creation nor a series of instantaneous creations. The other school may be termed the ancient school, because it prevailed in the church from a very ancient period until the latter half of the nineteenth century; the theological school, because it assumes as settled that the Bible is a revelation from God and consequently possesses certain characteristics which it thinks such a revelation must be assumed to possess; the traditional school, because it accepts as presumptively, if not conclusively true, certain opinions respecting the date, authorship, and character of different books in the Bible which have been traditionally held in the church from a very early period.

I accept frankly, fully, and without reserve the first of these schools, and have written this book for a double purpose: first, to tell the general reader what is the spirit and what the methods and the general conclusions of this school respecting the Bible; and second, to show that these do not imperil spiritual faith, — that, on the contrary, they enhance the value of the Bible as an instrument for the cultivation of the spiritual faith.

What will the New Criticism do with the Bible, is a fair question to ask, and the time has come to give it at least a partial answer. The believer in the New Criticism replies that it has already brought back into the Bible some books which had almost dropped out of it, such as the Song of Songs, Ecclesiastes, and Job; that it has relieved from some ethical difficulties some other books, such as Joshua and Leviticus; that it has made credible as fiction some passages which had been incredible as history, such as the legend of the Fall and the satire of Jonah; that it has made practically applicable to our own time other portions of the Bible, such as the civil laws contained in Exodus and Deuteronomy; that it has given a new and deeper spiritual significance to still other portions, as to some of the Psalms and to the latter half of the Book of Isaiah. The end is not yet; but enough has been accomplished to satisfy the believer in the New Criticism that its effect will

be to destroy that faith in the letter which killeth, and to promote that faith in the spirit which maketh alive; to lead the Christian to see in the Bible a means for the development of faith in the God of the Bible, not an object which faith may accept in lieu of God's living presence; to regard the Bible, not as a book of philosophy about religion, but as a book of religious experiences, the more inspiring to the religious life of man because frankly recognized as a book simply, naively, divinely human.

I am indebted to so many authors of whose original investigations I have made free use that I attempt no acknowledgment to them here. Recognition of my obligations to them will be found in the notes scattered through the volume.

It should be added that in the preparation of this volume I have followed the lines and used freely the material employed on the course of Sunday evening lectures on the Old Testament given in Plymouth Church, Brooklyn, N. Y., in the winter of 1896–97, and the subsequent course of lectures given before the Lowell Institute of Boston on the same theme, in the winter of 1899–1900; but that the book is not a reproduction of either course.

LYMAN ABBOTT.

Cornwall-on-the-Hudson, N. Y.

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THE WRITINGS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT IN THE ORDER OF THEIR COMPOSITION

WITH AUTHORS AND APPROXIMATE DATES

In case a book is ascribed to a *period* rather than a *year*, the date of the *terminus ad quem* determines its position in this table. In the main Driver's *Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament* has been followed. By reference to the chronological table on pages xi.–xiii. the reader may see under what circumstances the various writings were composed.

Date, B. C.	Writings.	Authors (or Editors).
1250	"Book of the Covenant" (virtually as in Exod. xx.–xxiii.) and probably other traditional portions of the Hexateuch.	Moses.
1000	Earlier psalms, probably.	David (?)
940	Earlier proverbs, probably.	Solomon (?)
940–882	Song of Songs, though by some considered as late as 247–221, in the Greek period.	Anonymous.
874–800	Proverbs x.–xxii. 16.	"Wise Men."
900–750	Jehovistic narrative / Elohistic narrative } documents of the Pentateuch. (Much uncertainty as to which is earlier.)	"J" (a Judaic writer). "E" (an Ephraimitic writer).
760–746	Amos.	Amos.
746–734	Hosea.	Hosea.
740–701	Isaiah i.–xxxix.	Isaiah.
700	I. and II. Samuel, though in part nearly contemporary with the events narrated.	Anonymous.
700 *circa*	Ruth, though by some considered as late as 445.	Anonymous.
722–685	Micah.	Micah.
690–640 *circa*	Deuteronomy.	Anonymous.
626 *circa*	Zephaniah.	Zephaniah.
667–604	Nahum.	Nahum.
600 *seq.*	Judges.	Anonymous.
608–597	Habakkuk.	Habakkuk.
586	I. and II. Kings.	Anonymous.
586	Jeremiah.	Jeremiah.
586	Lamentations.	Jeremiah or contemporaries.
586 *seq.*	Obadiah, though possibly later.	Obadiah.
600–570	Code of Holiness (Lev. xvii.–xxvi.).	"H."

The Writings of the Old Testament — continued.

Date, b. c.	Writings.	Authors (or Editors).
593–570	Ezekiel.	Ezekiel.
549 *circa*	Isaiah xl.–lxvi. (Second Isaiah).	Unknown prophet or prophets.
549 *circa*	Job.	Anonymous.
593–537	Many psalms.	Various anonymous authors.
570–530	Priestly narrative.	"P."
570–530	Leviticus.	"P."
520–518	Haggai.	Haggai.
	Zechariah i.–viii.	Zechariah.
464 *circa*	"Malachi" (i. e. "My Messenger").	Anonymous.
431	Pentateuch virtually completed. (Joshua not included in the canon until later.)	Anonymous.
410	Joel. (It is maintained by some, however, that Joel is as early as 836.)	Joel.
333 *seq.*	I. and II. Chronicles.	A Levite.
333 *seq.*	Ezra, Nehemiah — based on authentic memoirs.	A Levite, perhaps "the Chronicler."
332 *seq.*	Esther.	Anonymous.
332–306	The Book of Jonah.	Anonymous.
350–300	Book of Proverbs compiled.	Anonymous.
333–280	Zechariah ix.–xiv.	Anonymous.
200	Ecclesiastes, — though possibly as early as 333.	Pseudonymous.
516–168	Many psalms. The Psalter practically as at present compiled.	Anonymous.
168	Daniel.	Anonymous.
165 *seq.*	Probably some later psalms, during the Maccabean period.	Various anonymous authors.

CHRONOLOGY OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

The Chronology of the Old Testament is to a certain extent hypothetical; prior to the Exodus it is wholly so. In preparing this table, use has been made of *The Religion of Israel*, by Karl Budde, and the Commentaries on *Isaiah* and on *The Twelve Prophets*, by George Adam Smith. The latter has been accepted and followed without question in the period of which he treats, — that is, from the disruption of the kingdom, B. C. 940.

Dates B. C.	Prophets.	Events.	
3000 to 1250	Scene of Job and Genesis stories.	Patriarchal Age.	
1250	Book of Covenant.	Exodus from Egypt; giving of the law on Mt. Sinai; foundation of Mosaism.	
1000	Earlier Psalms written.	David becomes king.	
960	Wisdom literature begins. Scene of Song of Songs and Ecclesiastes.	Solomon.	
		Division of the kingdom.	
		Judah.	Israel.
940		Rehoboam.	Jeroboam I. Establishment of calf worship in Northern Israel.
923		Abijam.	
920		Asa.	
918			Nadab.
915			Baasha.
891			Elah.
888			Zimri, Omri.
876			Ahab.
874		Jehosaphat.	
854	Elijah.		
853			Ahaziah, son of Ahab.
852			Joram or Jehoram, son of Ahab.
849		Jehoram, son of Jehosaphat.	
844		Ahaziah.	
842	Elisha.	Athaliah.	
836		Joash, son of Ahaziah.	Jehu.
814			Jehoahaz.
798			Joash, son of Jehoahaz.

Chronology of the Old Testament — continued.

Dates B. C.	Prophets.	Events.	
		Judah.	Israel.
797		Amaziah.	
783	Jonah (2 Kings xiv. 25).		Jeroboam II.
778		Uzziah (Azariah).	
775–765			Jeroboam reconquers Moab, Gilead, etc.
763			Total eclipse of the sun (Amos viii. 9).
759–745	Amos.		
743			Zechariah, Shallum, Menahem.
740	Hosea.	Death of King Uzziah. Jotham sole ruler.	
737			Pekahiah.
736		Ahaz.	
735			Pekah.
730			Hoshea.
727		Hezekiah.	
725	Isaiah i.–xxxix.		Siege of Samaria.
722 or 721			Fall of Samaria. Captivity of Israel.
715			Samaria colonized by Assyrians.
701	Micah.	Invasion of Judah. Deliverance of Jerusalem.	
695–685		Manasseh.	
676		Manasseh tributary to Assyria.	
641		Amon.	
639		Josiah.	
627		Jeremiah appears.	
626	Zephaniah.		
621		Book of the law (Deuteronomy) discovered. Josiah's reforms begin. Passover (2 Kings xxii., xxiii.).	
620	Habakkuk (?).		
608	Nahum (?).	Necho II. defeats and slays Josiah at Megiddo; Judah Egyptian vassal.	
602–600	Jeremiah.	Jehoahaz. Jehoiakim. Judah vassal of Babylon. Jehoiachin.	
597		Temple plundered; Zedekiah vassal to Babylon. First Great Exile to Babylon.	
593	Ezekiel.	Jewish revolt against Babylon; opposed by Jeremiah.	
587–586	Obadiah (?)	Jerusalem taken by Nebuchadnezzar; Second Great Exile to Babylon.	

Chronology of the Old Testament — continued.

DATES B. C.	PROPHETS.	EVENTS. JUDAH.
549	The "Second Isaiah," also called the "Great Unknown." (Isaiah xl.–lxvi.)	Release assured to the Jews by the appearance of Cyrus against Babylonia.
537		The Jews return to Jerusalem from Babylon under Zerubabbel and Joshua. Restoration of altar and sacrifice.
520 516	Haggai. Zechariah i.–viii.	Building of the temple by Zerubabbel and Joshua. Completion of the temple.
464	"Malachi."	
458		Ezra arrives at Jerusalem.
445		Nehemiah arrives at Jerusalem.
444		Establishment of the law. Rebuilding of walls.
432		Nehemiah's return to Jerusalem.
431		Pentateuch virtually completed.
410	Joel.	
350–345		Insurrection in Judah. Much bloodshed there (Jos. Ant. B. xi. ch. 7, § 1). Jews subdued by Holofernes (Book of Judith). Many Jews taken to Hyrcania.
332 320 306	Zechariah ix.–xiv. Book of Jonah.	Ptolemy takes Jerusalem (?).
264		Egypt's wars for Palestine.
260 160	Probable close of prophetic canon.	About this time Greek translation of the Pentateuch.

LIFE AND LITERATURE OF THE ANCIENT HEBREWS

CHAPTER I

THE BIBLE AS LITERATURE

The word "Scriptures" means writings; the word "Bible," a transliteration of the Greek word "Biblia," means books. In both cases the plural form indicates the fact that from the earliest ages the Bible has been recognized to be, not a writing or book, but a collection of writings or books. When the singular form is used in the New Testament, the reference is generally, if not always, to a specific passage; when the writer is referring to the whole collection of the Old Testament, he uses the plural form.[1] The Bible is a library of sixty-six different books, written by a great number of writers, writing for the most part without coöperation. These books have for convenience' sake been bound

[1] Illustrations of the use of the singular to denote a particular book or passage are afforded by Mark xii. 10; xv. 28; John vii. 38; x. 35; Acts viii. 32; Rom. iv. 3; Gal. iv. 30; 1 Tim. v. 18. Illustrations of the use of the plural to indicate all the books of the Old Testament are afforded by Matt. xxi. 42; xxii. 29; xxvi. 54; Luke xxiv. 27; John v. 39; Rom. i. 2; xv. 4.

together, but for careful study they must be considered separately. This is not equivalent to the declaration that there is no other unity in this book than the mere mechanical unity made by the binder's art. That there is a real ethical and spiritual unity will appear all the more clearly from a study of them as separate books or writings; but that they are really, not merely formally or apparently, independent is the first fact which the student of the Bible must recognize. There is nothing new or startling in this assertion; it has always been known that the Bible is a collection of independent writings by different authors; but modern criticism is at once using this fact in its study of the Bible, and laying emphasis upon it as the result and by the methods of its study.

Scientific investigation of any subject may be said to consist of the two correlative processes of analysis and synthesis. By the first the object is separated into its several parts; by the second it is put together again into an organic whole. The Bible has always been subjected to these processes; but in the older form of study it was to a considerable extent regarded as one book, by one divine author, though divided into separate books, chapters, and verses for convenience of study. The analysis then consisted in this separation of the one book into separate books, chapters, and verses, and was a mechanical rather than a literary analysis; the synthesis consisted in putting these verses together in new relations for the purpose

of constructing a system of theology or perhaps of ethics. In this synthetic process little or no attention was paid to the fact that the Bible is a collection of books written by different authors, at different times, under different circumstances, for different purposes, and possessing different degrees of spiritual development. Sometimes the text was wrested from its context, and made to bear a meaning which it certainly did not bear in the mind of the original writer, as in the common citation of the verse, "As a tree falls, so shall it lie," cited as a proof-text against the possibility of a future probation;[1] sometimes it was used to support a doctrine the opposite of that intended by the author, as in the not infrequent citation of the text, "Touch not, taste not, handle not," as authority for total abstinence, when in the original it is quoted by Paul from ascetic teachers only for the purpose of condemning it, and the philosophy which he supposes it to represent.[2] Occasionally

[1] "It may be noted, as an illustration of the way in which the after-thoughts of theology have worked their way into the interpretation of Scripture, that the latter clause has been expounded as meaning that the state in which men chance to be when death comes on them is unalterable, that there is 'no repentance in the grave.' So far as it expresses the general truth that our efforts to alter the character of others for the better must cease when the man dies, that when the tree falls to south or north, towards the region of light or that of darkness, we, who are still on the earth, cannot prune, or dig about, or dung it (Luke xiii. 8), the inference may be legitimate enough, but it is clear that it is not that thought which was prominent in the mind of the writer." *The Cambridge Bible*, Ecclesiastes, p. 206.

[2] Col. ii. 21. See Alford's Greek Testament and T. K. Abbott's *International Critical Commentary*.

this use of texts regardless of their authorship and original intent led to amusing results. Many years ago, when this use of the Bible was more common than it is now, a Judge of the Supreme Court of New York said in a legal decision, "We have the highest possible authority for saying 'Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life.'" The next morning the New York "Herald" commented on this opinion substantially as follows: "We find that it was the devil who said, 'Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life:' now we know who it is that our Supreme Court Judges regard as the highest possible authority."

But this textual use of the Bible was by no means confined to misuses such as these. One has only to turn to any theological sermon of one of the older New England divines, such as Jonathan Edwards or Nathaniel Emmons, or to the collection of texts accumulated in footnotes in support of the articles of the Westminster Confession of Faith, or in such a Roman Catholic collection as "The Divine Armory of Holy Scripture," to see that in this older method of Bible use no attempt was made to consider the comparative weight, the local meaning, or the original application of Scripture texts; all were treated as of equal value, and applied regardless of their literary significance and human authorship.[1]

[1] Thus the *Divine Armory* cites as authority for "the noble lineage, immaculate conception, and virginity" of the Virgin

And such use of Scripture was measurably justified by the conception which the fathers more or less consciously entertained concerning the Bible as one book, whose real author was God, though it was written by many human amanuenses. In studying the statutes of a State we do not inquire who reported them, nor even what legislator proposed their enactment; for the authority of the statute is in the legislature, not in the reporter nor in the individual legislator. In studying the decisions of a court, all we care to know about the reporter is that he has given a fairly correct report of the decision; even the personality of the individual judge who wrote the opinion is a matter of wholly secondary significance; for the authority rests in the court whose decision is announced, not in the judge who announces it nor in the reporter who records it. Somewhat similarly, the character and circumstances of the individual writer in the Bible were not improperly ignored by those who held that he was only an amanuensis or reporter, or at least *quasi* private secretary, who recorded, though to a certain extent in his own language, the authoritative and inerrant, if not absolutely verbally dictated, utterances of an omniscient God. It was even sometimes affirmed that we can only think in

Mary, the verse from the Song of Songs: "Thou art all fair, O my love, and there is no spot in thee;" and the Westminster Confession of Faith cites in support of the doctrine that the hopes of the unregenerate are illusory and vain the argument of Bildad that Job must have been a great sinner or his prosperity would not have come to naught (Job viii. 13, 14).

language, and therefore, if the thoughts of the writers were inspired, the words must have been dictated.[1] Those who entertained this conception of the Bible paid little or no attention to the specific character of the different writers or the different writings. No account, for example, was made of the fact that the Book of Job is largely a hot debate between disputants who take absolutely antagonistic views of the same problem; their utterances were quoted as of equal authority. A quotation from an old poem affirming that the sun and moon stood still to prolong the victory of Joshua and make more overwhelming the defeat of his enemies was regarded as scientifically author-

[1] "Calovius was the author of the theory which is usually denominated the Orthodox Protestant theory. According to him, inspiration is the form which revelation assumes, and nothing exists in the Scriptures which was not divinely suggested and inspired (*divinitus suggestum et inspiratum*). Quenstedt, Baier, Hollaz, and others followed, affirming that the writers were dependent upon the Spirit for their very words, and denying that there were any solecisms in the New Testament. The Buxtorfs extended inspiration to the vowel-points of the Old Testament. This view was adopted in the *Formula Cons. Helv.*, and Gisbert Voëtius extended inspiration to the very punctuation. This doctrine was an absolute novelty." *Religious Encyclopedia*, Schaff-Herzog, article Inspiration. Compare also article on Inspiration in *Encyclopædia Britannica*. These extreme views were not, however, those of the most eminent of either the Roman Catholic or the Protestant divines; the Westminster Confession of Faith implies a spiritual rather than a literalistic doctrine of inspiration in its declaration (chapter i., § 5), "our full persuasion and assurance of the infallible truth and divine authority thereof is from the inward work of the Holy Spirit bearing witness by and with the word in our hearts."

itative, to be reconciled if possible with the postulates of modern science, but, whether reconciled or not, to be accepted.[1] Such inconsistencies in the historical narratives as the statement in one account of the Deluge that the animals went by twos into the ark, and in another that some of them went by sevens,[2] or in the Book of Samuel that Jehovah moved David to number Israel, and in the Book of Chronicles that Satan tempted him,[3] it was thought necessary to harmonize on the theory that both statements proceeded from one infallible author and were recorded by infallible penmen. Inter-

[1] "'The Book of Jasher' was in all probability a collection, rhythmical in form and poetical in diction, of various pieces celebrating the heroes of the Hebrew nation and their achievements." *The Cambridge Bible,* Josh. x. 13. Compare *The Bible Commentary* on the same. Compare also the *Polychrome Bible,* Book of Joshua, p. 72. Of this passage (Josh. x. 12, 13) it says: "The quotation is poetic and figurative, as in the Song of Deborah (Judg. v. 20), *the stars fought against Sisera;* it seems, however, to have been misunderstood and taken literally by subsequent editors. It means simply: *May God grant us victory before the sun sets.* Similarly Agamemnon prays to Zeus that the sun may not set before Priam's dwelling is overthrown (Il. 2, 413 ff.). At the bidding of Athene the sunset was delayed for the sake of Ulysses (Od. 23, 241 ff.), and, on another occasion, hastened at the command of Hera, in order to save the Greeks (Il. 18, 239 ff.). Of course, if there were an adequate motive for a miracle here, or any appreciable evidence that a miracle took place, scientific objections would be irrelevant, because, from the very idea of a miracle, its physical antecedents and mechanism are unintelligible and cannot be discussed. But there is no reason to suppose that the narrative originally stated that a miracle happened."

[2] Compare Gen. vi. 20, and vii. 9, with Gen. vii. 2, 3.

[3] 2 Sam. xxiv. 1; 1 Chron. xxi. 1.

pretations of history found in the Bible which attributed the wholesale massacre of the Canaanite to Jehovah's direct command,[1] expressions contained in it of the natural feeling of the persecuted exiles crying out to Jehovah for vengeance on cruel Babylon,[2] it was deemed necessary to make congruous with the command of Christ, "But I say unto you, Love your enemies," since both were assumed to have emanated equally directly from the same divine Author.[3]

The modern student of the Bible frankly recognizes these self-contradictions in the Bible, and they do not trouble him, because they do not militate

[1] Josh. viii. 2; x. 40.

[2] Ps. cxxxvii. 8, 9. Stanley in his *History of the Jewish Church* treats of the apparent contradiction between certain teachings in the Old Testament and others in the New Testament thus: "That this inferiority of the Old Dispensation was an acknowledged element in the 'gradualness and partialness' of Revelation, inevitably flows from the definition of Revelation as given by the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, 'God who in sundry times and in divers manners spake in times past to our fathers'" (p. 280), and refers to Chrysostom's Homily on 1 Cor. ch. xiii., where he says, quoting Ps. cxxxix. 21, 22: "Now because he has brought us to a more entire self-command . . . he bids us rather admit and soothe them. . . . We must not hate but pity." This is an application of the evolutionary philosophy long before evolution was recognized as a philosophy.

[3] Much ingenuity has been displayed in the endeavor to reconcile the apparent contradictions in the Bible between different authors, or between Biblical authors and scientific conclusions, or the moral consensus of mankind. Some treatises of considerable ability have been devoted wholly to this task. See, for example, J. W. Haley's *An Examination of the Alleged Discrepancies of the Bible* (1873), and Robert Tuck's *A Handbook of Biblical Difficulties*, 2 vols. (1886).

against his conception of the inspiration of the writers or the character and authority of their writings. The differences between the old view and the new view are radical and even revolutionary, and the advocates of the new method seem to me mistaken when, to guard against the fears of the timid, they endeavor to minimize the differences between the new and the old. The question between the two is not merely whether there are some errors in the science or history of the Bible, still less whether there were any in the original autographs, long since lost. The point of view, the methods of study, the theological assumptions which underlie that study, and the results attained, differ, and differ very widely. It is a great deal better to recognize these differences frankly than to attempt to conceal them either from others or from ourselves.

By the modern school the method of dividing the Bible into a series of texts, treating them all as of equal authority and weight, because equally words of God, and constructing a system of theology by piecing them together, is not only abandoned as antiquated; it is frankly condemned as unscientific and erroneous. A new method is proposed to take its place; this new method goes by the infelicitous title of the "Higher Criticism." I call it infelicitous because, while to scholars its meaning is perfectly clear, to many people it is not, for the simple reason that it is a technical term, and in it the words are used in a technical and non-popular sense. To the non-scientific reader criticism of anything

signifies judgment of it, and generally such judgment as discovers and exhibits its imperfections; to such the phrase "higher criticism" suggests a superior kind of judgment of the Bible, and connotes a kind of spiritual egotism in the higher critic. To the scientific student the word "criticism" applied to the Bible means "inquiry into the origin, history, authenticity, character, etc., of the literary documents"[1] of which it is composed. Lower criticism means such inquiry into the text or into particular texts, and is equivalent to textual criticism; higher criticism means inquiry into the documents as a whole, their integrity, authenticity, credibility, authorship, circumstances of their composition, and the like, and is equivalent to literary criticism.[2] Applied to the study of Shakespeare, the question, Is the disputed line to be read "To the manner born" or "To the manor born"? would belong to lower criticism; the question, how largely the sonnets of Shakespeare are really autobiographical in their character, how largely they are dramatic impersonations of sentiment, would belong to higher

[1] *Century Dictionarg.*

[2] Higher Criticism is sometimes called philosophical study of the Bible. "It is named the Higher Criticism because it is higher in its order and in its work than the Lower or Textual Criticism. This department of criticism has lived and worked under this name for more than a century. . . . The Higher Criticism devotes its attention to the literary features of the Bible. It has four great questions to answer: As to the integrity of the writings; as to the authenticity of the writings; as to literary features; as to the credibility of the writings." C. A. Briggs, D. D., *The Study of Holy Scripture*, pp. 92 and 95.

criticism. It would be a mistake to suppose that either lower criticism or higher criticism is peculiar to the present half-century; there have always been both a textual and a literary study of the Bible, both a lower and a higher criticism ; but in our time new emphasis has been attached and new importance given to the literary study, or higher criticism. In these articles I shall discard technical expressions, because the book is not intended primarily for technical students ; I shall, therefore, speak of the literary study, rather than of the higher criticism, of the Bible.

Employing a new method in its study of the Bible, the new school approaches this study with a different theological assumption from that of the old school. The difference is not easily defined ; but it is all the more important because it is rather spiritual than philosophical, and therefore transcends exact definition. The old theology laid emphasis on what is called the transcendence of God ; the new theology on his immanence. The old theology regarded God as apart from matter, and creating the world as an architect or builder by mechanical processes ; as apart from nature, and directing it as an engineer his engine ; as apart from humanity, and ruling over his subjects as a king ; as apart from man, and mysteriously joined to him in the incarnation of the God-man. The new theology conceives of God as dwelling in matter, shaping it as the soul shapes the body ; dwelling in nature, and ruling it as the soul rules the body ; dwelling

in man, and controlling him less by law and power than by influence, less as a king rules his subjects than as a father controls his loyal son; entering into man in the incarnation, and becoming God manifest in the flesh, Christ being the God-in-man rather than the God-and-man.[1] This theological point of view applied to the Bible changes our conception of inspiration and revelation. The new view believes in revelation, but conceives it less as a disclosing of an external God to man than as an unveiling of God in human experience; it believes in inspiration, but it conceives of inspiration less as an addition to human experience of something superhuman than as a transfusion of human experience by a Spirit who is superhuman. It consequently regards the Bible, not so much an addition to human knowledge of certain truths before unknown if not unknowable, as the record of a spiritual consciousness in certain souls, which is possible, in varying degree, to the souls of all. Taking as its definition of religion "the life of God in the soul of man," it regards the Bible as a book of religion rather than as a book about religion; that is, as the transcription of the experiences of men who were conscious of the life of God in their times, their nation, and their own souls. This consciousness of God in themselves constituted their inspiration; and in this consciousness of God in their own souls God was

[1] For an excellent outworking of this doctrine of the divine immanence as applied to all branches of theology see *The Religion of To-morrow*, by Frank Crane.

revealed to them. Just in so far as this consciousness of God awakens a corresponding consciousness of God in us, is it a revelation of God to us, and no further. The Bible is, therefore, to be conceived, not as an unnaturally divine book, nor as a book partly divine and partly human; it is a divine-in-human book, and to us all the more divine because human. Through it God is revealed to our consciousness, because in it God is seen revealed in the consciousness of its writers. We see God in it, not apart from human consciousness, but in human consciousness, not as he is in himself, but as he was seen, felt, realized, by holy men. As the supreme revelation of God to man in life is God dwelling in man in the incarnation, so the supreme revelation of God to man in literature is God dwelling in the writers of the books which constitute the literature.

When, therefore, he who is accustomed to the conception of an infallible and inerrant book asks the modern student how, on this conception of the Bible as a divine-in-human book, it is possible to separate the divine from the human, and tell what is divine and what human, the answer is that it is no more possible to make such a separation in the Bible than it is to separate the divine from the human in Christ. The Bible is not a composite of divine gold mixed with human alloy, which we must somehow separate from the alloy in order to get a standard degree of fineness. It is rather like oxygen mixed with nitrogen in the air that we may better breathe it. What reader can tell how much of his thinking

is inspired by Carlyle, how much by Robertson, how much by Thackeray, how much by Browning? The more thoroughly he has thought over what he has read, and the more he has made that thought his own, the less he can distinguish the sources and the inspiration of his thinking. So the closer these holy men were to God, the less possible it was for them to tell what of their thoughts were divine in source and what were their own; still less can we make such a discrimination. Nor is it desirable to do so. What we need is not merely God, but God in us; and therefore a book which gives us a record of the experiences of men in whom God dwelt is a more valuable book to conduct us to God than a book which should give us, were such a book possible, a representation of God apart from men. The fact that the writers were men of like passions as we ourselves are, that they saw in part and prophesied in part, and saw as in a glass darkly,[1] makes them the better interpreters of the life of God to us, in our partialism and our imperfection. This collection of books is a record of the experiences of men who had in larger or lesser degree the consciousness of God dwelling in them. It is a record of religious experience, and that is a record of the life of God in the soul of man; not of the life of God only, but of the life of God *in the soul of man;* and the man in whom God dwells is quite as essential to the religious revelation as the God who dwells in him, because religion is the combination of the two, God and man, dwelling together.

[1] 1 Cor. xiii. 9, 12.

It does not, therefore, disturb us in the least to find human error and imperfection in the collection. We find, and we should expect to find, writers holding the scientific opinions of their times, thinking the world was flat; that the province in which they lived was nearly the whole of it; that the Mediterranean was the "Great Sea"; that the stars and sun and moon revolved around the earth on which they lived, and were made simply to light it. We find them absolutely ignorant of the laws of nature; never, therefore, even entertaining the question whether laws of nature were violated or not, but looking at all phenomena with childlike interest, as little children look at such phenomena now. We find them with as little ability to exercise critical historical judgment as to exercise scientific judgment, accepting without criticism the legends that come down to them, and seeking in them for some vision or some modification of their vision of God in his world. We find them from the first believing that God is a righteous God, and demands righteousness of his children; but in the earlier stages not knowing what righteousness is, and growing to a broader and better conception of righteousness as the race grows in age and in experience. And to find such errors, scientific, historical, philosophic, in this record of the religious experience of a race, does not disturb in the least our faith that the collection contains a revelation of God in man and to man.[1]

[1] See chapter ii., "The Evolution of the Bible," in my *Evolution*

With this radical change in our theological conception comes a change scarcely less radical in our process of analysis and synthesis. We study the Bible no longer by texts; we analyze it no longer into texts; we no longer even print it in texts, or we indicate the texts by numbers in the margin, as in the Revised Version. We study the Bible by books and by authors; we compare, not text with text, but author with author. We endeavor to ascertain the character of the author, his temperament, the time in which he lived, the audience to which he spoke, the immediate purpose which animated him. Single texts are no longer conclusive; they are valuable just in the measure in which they are an interpretation of what a devout soul thought under the inspiration of God about the truth of God. We no more go to the Bible for a text to settle for us what is the truth, or what the teaching of the Bible, or what even the teaching of the individual writer, than we go to a single sentence in a speech of Daniel Webster to settle for us what is his teaching. We measure Paul by entire Epistles; the Psalmist by an entire Psalm; each writer by the totality of his writing. In brief, we apply to this collection of writings the same methods of critical study which we apply to any other, sure that the best method of getting at the thought of God is to get at the life of the man in whom he dwelt and whose experience he inspired.[1]

of Christianity, for some illustrations of the principle embodied in this paragraph.

[1] Excellent illustrations of the fruit of this method of study are

This method of study by literary, not textual, analysis, founded on the theological assumption that God's revelation to man is in and through a human experience, gives, of course, very different results from the former method. Subjecting this book to this literary analysis, we find it, not a book, but a collection of writings.[1] If we suppose, as I do, that the oldest book of the Bible, the Book of the Covenant,[2] is, as to its essential contents, though not as to its literary form, as old as Moses, say about B. C. 1250, and that the Epistles of John are probably the latest books of the Bible, and were written about the close of the first century, then a period of thirteen or fourteen centuries elapsed between the earliest and the latest of these writings[3]; and if we can ascertain even approxi-

furnished by Prof. J. F. Genung's monograph on Job, *The Epic of the Inner Life;* by Dr. W. E. Griffis's monograph on the Song of Songs, *The Lily among Thorns;* and by some of the volumes of *The Expositor's Bible*, especially that of Dr. Samuel Cox on *The Book of Ecclesiastes* and that of Dr. George Adam Smith on *The Book of Isaiah.*

[1] Professor Moulton's *Modern Reader's Bible* (The Macmillan Company) represents this fact to the eye by printing the Bible in separate volumes, each of them arranged, as far as practicable, as a complete volume and in the literary form which he supposes would characterize it, in order to bring out its true literary character.

[2] Exod. xx. 1–xxiv. 7. See *post*, chapter iv., "The Political Institutions of the Hebrews."

[3] If modern scholars are correct in attributing the second epistle of Peter to the middle or late part of the second century (see A. C. McGiffert's *Apostolic Age*, pp. 602, 603) the period covered by the Biblical writings must be extended.

mately the date of the intermediate writings, we can trace the rise and progress of that conscious life of God in the soul of man which constitutes the essence of religion. Thus the Bible becomes to us what I may call a record of the biology of religion. We further find in this volume an illustration of almost every type of literature, at least what appears so to be, and our theological assumption does not require us to suppose that the appearances are deceptive. We find ancient legends, constitutional law, political statutes, ecclesiastical law, history, epic poetry, lyric poetry, gnomic poetry, drama, folklore, fiction, ethical culture, oratory — both secular and spiritual — biography, philosophy — both rational and mystical — and dream literature.

But the student does not stop in his analytical study of this Hebrew anthology with this result. With the aid of scholars he pursues the analysis further. He analyzes the historical books, and by the analysis discovers in them clear traces of the materials which the historian employed. He traces in the law books the development of political institutions from their earlier and simpler to their later and more complex form. He discovers in the history of the Hebrew Church the same antagonism between simplicity and elaborateness of ritual which characterizes the Church of the Middle Ages, and the same consciousness of God in the ancient Puritan and the ancient sacerdotalist which he can, if he will, discern in both the analogous types of a

later time. He discovers evidences of many authors of different temperaments in the collection of lyrics brought together under the general title of the Psalms. He becomes convinced that the Book of Proverbs is not a book by a single royal author, but a collection of apothegms gathered from many sources and representing the practical experience of the ancient Hebrew people. He discovers evidence that the writings of a school of preachers have sometimes been grouped together under the general title of one of their number. These and kindred facts which his analysis brings to light very materially modify the interpretations which are to be given to these different writings. For no one reads fiction as he reads philosophy, or poetry as he reads law, or dream literature as he reads history. Nor does he expect science in an unscientific age, nor philosophy from a purely practical age, nor Christian ethics in a barbaric age, nor the highest and purest spiritual experiences before the spiritual nature of man has received its later developments.

I believe that the final result of this analysis will be to extend the use of the Bible, and to enhance affection and reverence for it; that when we discover God interpreted in the consciousness of imperfect men like ourselves, we shall find that he is nearer to us than we thought he was; and when every man finds in this library an interpretation of this God-consciousness in that form of literature which most appeals to him, its influence will be

both strengthened and diffused. The child will find it in the story, the youth in the romance and the drama, the lawyer in the political institutions, the ecclesiastic in the canons, the moralist in the apothegms, the rationalist in the philosophy, the mystic in the visions, the man of action in the history, and all in the supreme biography which constitutes the natural climax of the whole collection.

This is perhaps to anticipate the conclusion to which I hope in this volume to conduct such readers as have an inclination to read it to the end. Suffice it to say here that the synthesis of the modern study differs as much from that of the ancient method as does the analysis which I have here described from that of the older method. The modern student can no longer take texts from Genesis, Leviticus, Kings, Job, the Song of Songs, Isaiah, and Romans, and, ignoring the fact that the first book is one of ancient tradition, the second a book of ecclesiastical canons, the third a political history, the fourth an epic poem, the fifth a drama, the sixth a collection of odes and orations, and the seventh an epistolary treatise on theology, treat them as though they are all to be interpreted in the same fashion, and can be combined in a textual mosaic which should be accepted as a standard in theology. But he can study the writings of the various authors, ascertain the thought and catch the spirit of each, and, comparing them with one another, learn in what they agree and in what they differ. I believe that such a synthesis will make

it clear that these men of dissimilar epochs, conditions, and temperaments, widely as they differ, not only in their form of expression, but in their mode of thought, agree in their essential spirit, and, in so far, in their essential religious message. If out of such a synthesis there emerges a system of theology not so definite as that framed by the old method, I believe it will be less scholastic and more spiritual. If so, the gain will far counterbalance any possible loss.

There is one objection, if not to the literary method of study here defined and defended, at least to the results here indicated and summarized, which ought to be frankly stated and as frankly met.

The Old Testament existed, substantially in the form in which we now possess it, certainly two, probably three, and perhaps four centuries prior to the time of Christ, and there was a practically uniform tradition existing in the time of Christ respecting the date and authorship of most of these books. It was almost universally agreed among the Hebrew rabbis at that time that Moses wrote the whole of the Pentateuch; that Joshua wrote the Book of Joshua; that Samuel wrote the Books of Samuel, Esther, and Judges; the Books of Kings and Chronicles were conceded to be written by unknown authors; Job was thought to be written by Moses; the great majority of the Psalms by David or by men of his age; the great majority of the Proverbs, the whole of Ecclesi-

astes, and the Song of Songs by Solomon; Daniel by a prophet bearing that name; Isaiah by the son of Amoz; and the other prophets by the writers whose names they bear. The one possible exception to this was the Book of Jonah, which was regarded by some Hebrew scholars from a very early period as not being written by Jonah and as not being historical. The traditionalist, that is, he who bases his conclusions concerning Scripture upon tradition, considers that this long-lived belief substantially settles the question of date and authorship. He says that here is a tradition which has existed for two thousand years practically undisputed. It is true that it has been in some of its parts denied. Luther doubted it; Calvin denied it in part; but, on the whole, it has been accepted down to about the year 1750 with very little discussion. This undisputed tradition, the traditionalist thinks, establishes the date and authorship of these books; and he feels this the more strongly because he thinks these traditions were accepted and indorsed by Paul and by Jesus Christ, since they both cited from the books of Moses and from the different prophets without any intimation that these books were not written by the persons whose names they bear.[1]

To this tradition the literary student, or higher critic, pays little attention; the most conservative of his class is not stopped by it, the more radical

[1] For a full statement of this argument see *The Old Testament under Fire*, by A. J. F. Behrends, D. D., chap. iii.

disregards it altogether, for a variety of reasons. The fact that the tradition was for so long a time undisputed deprives it of weight. A tradition is of little scientific value until it has been subjected to careful investigation; and this tradition was never investigated until about a hundred and fifty years ago. It is, therefore, as a tradition, entitled to no more consideration than the Ptolemaic tradition in astronomy, or the long undisputed but now wholly discarded traditions respecting the early history of Greece and Rome. This particular tradition is of the less value because of the age in which it first appeared. If we trace it back to the fourth century before Christ, its birth is a thousand years after the time of Moses. The scientific thinker can see no reason for accrediting men who lived a thousand years after Moses with any better facilities for determining the authorship of their sacred books than have the scholars of our own time. A tradition concerning the authorship of a volume written ten, five, or even two centuries before the tradition first appears is not, to the scientific scholar, of any considerable value. If we could suppose that at that time the question was carefully studied by intelligent and unprejudiced scholars, some weight might be given to their conclusions. But this tradition had its rise among a school of rabbis whose methods were as far removed as possible from those of a rational and unprejudiced investigator. Paul, reared in the rabbinical school, has treated these traditions with

no respect, saying that when the rabbis read the law in their synagogues they had a veil over the face.[1] Christ spoke of them with even greater severity, saying that by their traditions the rabbis had made the word of God of none effect, and telling his disciples that their interpretations of the Old Testament showed them to be fools and blind.[2] Theologians who soberly maintained that the law existed two thousand years before the creation, and that Jehovah himself studied it in the heavens with his holy angels,[3] cannot be regarded as authority on questions of literature by Christian scholars in this close of the nineteenth century.

Nor does Christ give to this Jewish tradition any endorsement. There is nothing inconsistent with a rational recognition of his divine character in the opinion that he shared on these questions the common impressions of his time. But if he did, he never gave to those impressions the weight of his authority. He never undertook to speak with authority on the question of the date or authorship of Biblical books. He never makes Biblical criticism the subject of his teaching. He never bases his authority on that of the authors of the Biblical books. Sometimes he sets their authority aside, as in the Sermon on the Mount. Sometimes he cites their own Scriptures against his critics, in much the same

[1] 2 Cor. iii. 15. [2] Matt. xxiii. 17; Mark vii. 13.

[3] For illustrations of the spirit of traditionalism in the time of Christ see Edersheim's *Life and Times of Jesus*, Book I. chaps. vii. and viii.

spirit as that in which Paul, speaking in Athens, cites "certain of your own poets." It is true that he often refers to these books, and when he does, refers to them by the name by which they were known in his time; but such a reference does not even indicate his opinion as to their authorship, still less does it indicate any intention on his part to make an utterance on the subject which loyalty to him must regard as final. No popular writer or speaker would hesitate to refer to Æsop's Fables, although he might agree with the conclusion of modern scholarship that Æsop did not write them, but only gathered together the collection which bears his name from a mass of fables current among the Greeks of his time.[1]

I invite the reader, then, who will follow me further in this volume to follow me in the spirit of this Introduction; to imagine that there stands before him on the table, not a book, but a library of sixty-six different books, which represent the literature of a peculiar people, extending over a period of twelve hundred years or more, and are a survival of the fittest, out of a much larger number

[1] "His [Christ's] allusions to the Old Testament books and narratives are sometimes made a touchstone for determining ethical and historical questions, which were as foreign to the thought of his time as were the researches of anthropology or modern science. If his assertion 'Moses wrote' discredits modern criticism, does not his affirmation that the sun rises destroy modern astronomy?" G. B. Stevens, D. D., *The Theology of the New Testament*, p. 77. Compare Delitzsch on *Genesis:* Introduction, p. 21.

which have not survived;[1] to remember that this library has produced a profound moral impression on all that portion of the human race who have ever known it; to believe, therefore, that this collection is well worth his careful study; to assume, however, that it is to be studied, not as a collection of texts, out of which, by a process of mosaic work, a theology may be constructed, but as a collection of vital literature, out of which, by a course of literary study, life may be promoted and truth made both more apparent and more effective; and to enter on the study of these books in the spirit in which they were conceived, and with the purpose for which they were written, as that purpose has been defined by one whose writings are recognized as among the loftiest in the whole collection: "Every scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work."[2]

[1] Though some of the books to be found in the apocryphal Old Testament are morally equal to some of those included in the canon.

[2] 2 Tim. iii. 16, 17.

CHAPTER II

HEBREW HISTORY

THE history of the Hebrew nation, as it is recorded in the Bible, begins with the exodus from Egypt of the before-enslaved tribes; this exodus took place, according to the opinions of modern scholars, about B. C. 1250.[1] But the earlier history contained in the books of Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers may properly be regarded as constitutional history, and is so interwoven with the constitution and laws of the Hebrews that it will be more appropriately considered in the chapters devoted to a consideration of the origin and growth of those laws.[2] The distinctively historical books are those of Joshua, Judges, First and Second Samuel, First and Second Kings, First and Second Chronicles, Ezra, and Nehemiah. If we assume that the exodus took place about 1250 B. C., and the restoration of Israel to her land and the rebuilding of the city and temple, as described by Ezra and Nehemiah, about the year 450 B. C., the history of the ancient Hebrews, as narrated in the Old Testament, covers a period of about eight hundred years.

[1] See chronological table on page xi.

[2] See chapters iv. and v.

How were the facts which are narrated in these histories ascertained by the narrator?

A journalist lives and a biographer may live in the times when the events which he records took place, and then he may tell what he has himself seen; but a historian rarely is the narrator of events of which he was an eye-witness; he generally gathers his information from various sources, and in his history gives an account of the facts as he has ascertained them by historical research. There is no reason to suppose that the Hebrew historian pursued any other course.[1] We should expect that, writing of events occupying a period of something like a thousand years, he would have given us in his history the substance of accounts, documentary or oral, in which the history of those years had been preserved; in other words, we should expect that other materials than his own personal knowledge would enter into his history. This expectation is confirmed by a study of Oriental literature. Oriental histories, so the scholars tell us, are rarely original; they are compilations. The Oriental historian does not, as the modern historian, examine and investigate original sources, and give in his own language the results of his investigations; he takes what I may call the raw materials of history which he has discovered, and weaves them together, connecting them by utterances of his own. When a new edition is to be prepared, the new

[1] Luke expressly declares that he gathered the materials for his Gospel to some extent in this way (Luke i. 1-4).

writer simply takes this conglomerate and intercalates the new material which he has obtained, or appends it in additional pages.[1]

If, then, we suppose that Hebrew history was prepared as other Oriental histories have been prepared, we shall assume it possible by painstaking study to ascertain to some extent what are the materials of which it was composed. This is what modern students of Hebrew history have done; they have separated it into its constituent parts. They are not all of one mind in the details, but they are all of one mind in the belief that the Hebrew history is not only composed from pre-existing materials, as Macaulay's history or Green's history, but that it is so composed of preëxisting materials that, through linguistic peculiarities, forms of expression, historical references, and other indications, the various elements of the history can be measurably distinguished. Even the English reader of the Bible cannot fail to distinguish two of these constituent elements in the later history of the Hebrews, because these elements are not combined in one narrative. From the time of David,

[1] "It is the law of Oriental history writing, in fact, that one book should annihilate its predecessor. The sources of a compilation rarely survive the compilation itself. A book in the East is rarely recopied just as it stands. It is brought up to date by the addition to it of what is known, or supposed to be known, from other sources. The individuality of the historical book does not exist in the East; it is the substance, not the form, which is held of importance, and no scruple is felt about mixing up authors and styles. The end sought is to be complete, and that is all." *The History of Israel*, by Ernest Renan, vol. iii. pp. 50, 51.

that is, about 1000 B. C., to the time of the captivity, that is, about 600 B. C., the history is contained in two narratives, parallel in time but very different in spirit — the First and Second Books of Kings and the First and Second Books of Chronicles.

Thinkers may be roughly divided into two great types, one of which lays emphasis on truth, the other on organization. The first, fixing its attention on truth, forgets that to be efficient in society truth must be embodied; the second, fixing its attention on the mediating organization, forgets the truth which alone can vitalize it. Men of the first type, having no objective standard, often make a standard of their own personal opinions; indifferent to the coöperation of their fellow-men and strenuous in their own opinions, they refuse to compromise the latter to gain the former; and thus become irreconcilables and impracticables. Men of the second type, overestimating the force of numbers and of authority, and underestimating the force inherent in moral principles, too readily yield principles to gain recruits. They may, indeed, be quite ready to sacrifice self to truth, but they are too ready to sacrifice truth to organization. Lacking a standard in themselves, they seek it in the body to which they have attached themselves. In philosophy the first type of man is always a moral reformer, generally an independent, often a doctrinaire. His loyalty to his own convictions is strong; his loyalty to party is slight. The second

seeks to carry moral reform only so far as he can carry it through a political organization; he is generally an opportunist; he sometimes degenerates into what is called a "machine politician." In religion the first has faith, but no creed: he worships, but without a ritual; he is religious, but unchurchly. When organization meant the Church of Rome, he was a Protestant; when it meant the Established Church, a Puritan; when it meant Presbyterianism, an Independent; and when it meant Congregationalism, a "Come-outer." The second is always a Churchman, though he may be a Roman Churchman, an Anglican Churchman, a Presbyterian Churchman, or a Congregational Churchman. He is a defender of creeds, of the established order, of the ancient traditions — or, if he is inclined to reform, he will not carry reform so far as to break with the traditions of the past or the recognized authorities of his own ecclesiastical organization. In the history of the world the first is interested in the progress of ideas, the second in the development of institutions. Is he a historian? the first writes the story of popular life, the second that of institutional life. John Richard Green, writing the history of the English people, represents the first; Lord Macaulay, measuring all events by their relation to Whig principles and policies, or Lord Clarendon, measuring them by their relation to the Royalist principles and policies, represents the second.

This distinction is apparent upon even a most

cursory comparison of the Books of Kings and of Chronicles. The Book of Chronicles — really one book in two parts — is written by an ecclesiastic who identifies the religion of the Hebrew people with its churchly forms. His history is essentially Levitical in contents and in spirit — the history of Jerusalem, of the Temple, and of the Temple ordinances. National events are measured by their relation to the institutions of religion. When the separation of the before-united kingdom takes place, and the ten tribes form a nation by themselves in northern Palestine, leaving Jerusalem in the hands of the southern tribes, the author of Chronicles does not include them in his subsequent history, for they have no Temple, no Levitical priesthood, no orthodox ritual; to him, therefore, they are to all intents and purposes as pagans. Even the intensely religious and dramatically romantic lives of Elijah and Elisha do not concern him; they are in the northern kingdom, and they are unrelated to the ecclesiastical institutions of Hebraism. On the other hand, he gives in great detail the organization of the hierarchy, the furnishing of the Temple, the genealogies of the tribes, lists of the cities of the Levites, and makes much of the glory of Solomon, the builder of the Temple, and nothing of his decadence and fall. The Book of Kings — for this also is one book in two parts — is as distinctly prophetic as the parallel history is priestly in its character. "The writer records the fulfillment of the promises which God had made to

David and his line. A son was to succeed David whose kingdom should be established of the Lord, who should build a house for the Name of Jehovah, and to whom God would be a Father and from whom the name of the Lord should not depart.[1] To show that this prophecy was fulfilled is the object of the Book of Kings, and what does not conduce thereto is passed over by the compiler with little notice."[2] It is he alone who tells the story of Elijah and Elisha, he alone who records the influence of Isaiah in the reforms of Hezekiah, he alone who, in telling the story of Josiah's reform, indicates the extent to which the pollutions of the Temple and the priesthood had been carried in the previous reign of Manasseh. Each deals with the nation as the people of God; but to the one the divine life is centred in the ecclesiastical organization, to the other that life is manifested in the activity of the prophets, who belong to no order and are representatives of no organization. So marked is the difference between the two narratives that some scholars have attributed the Book of Chronicles to Ezra, the Book of Kings to Jeremiah; it is certain that the one is continued without a break, except a purely formal one, in the history of Ezra; it is equally certain that the other is pervaded by the spirit, not of the Levitical code,

[1] 2 Sam. chap. vii.

[2] *Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges*, Book of Kings, Introduction, p. xxiv.

but of the prophetic law contained in the Book of Deuteronomy.[1]

The modern scholar, seeing these two types of history, the priestly and the prophetic, in the later historical books of the Bible, has looked for and found them in the earlier books, though woven together into a single strand. The priestly narrative and the prophetic narrative, apparent to the casual English reader, in the form of our English Bible, from the reign of David to the Captivity, appear scarcely less evident to the modern literary student of the Bible in the historical narrative from the creation of the world to the time of David. In his analysis of the composite narrative the modern student may be sometimes mistaken; but that there were originally two such narratives, and that the two have been united in the one narrative which we now possess, is regarded by all scholars who apply literary and scientific methods to the study of the Bible as beyond all question.

In the first century after Christ, Tatian constructed a harmony of the Gospels which is known

[1] "Jewish tradition assigns the authorship of Kings to Jeremiah. Modern criticism neither unreservedly accepts nor wholly rejects this ascription." Canon F. C. Cook, *Bible Commentary*. "The recurrence of the final passage of our present copies of Chronicles at the commencement of Ezra, taken in conjunction with the undoubted fact that there is a very close resemblance of style and tone between the two books, suggests naturally the explanation, which has been accepted by some of the best critics, that the two works, Chronicles and Ezra, were originally one and were afterward separated." *Ibid.*

as the Diatessaron. It has been recently discovered in the Vatican, translated, and published. If the Four Gospels had disappeared, we should have in this Diatessaron one Gospel composed of the four narratives previously existing. Modern scholars are unanimously of the opinion that the Old Testament historical narratives, prior to the Book of Kings, are, in a somewhat similar manner, composed of two or more previously existing narratives, and that it is possible, to some extent, to separate the history into its different elements. One of these narratives is known as the priestly, or sometimes the Elohist narrative, because in it the Hebrew word Elohim is used to designate God; the other is termed the prophetic, or sometimes the Jahvist narrative, because in it the Hebrew word Jahveh or Jehovah is generally used to designate God. When the two words Jahveh-Elohim, or, as rendered in our English Bible, the LORD God, are used, the two narratives have been combined in one by an unknown editor. The opinion that the historical books are thus composed of preëxisting documents is what is known as the Documentary Hypothesis. But the scientific or literary student of the Bible regards this opinion as no longer hypothetical.

He also thinks that these original elements themselves are not original writings, but are composed of preëxisting materials, and these materials also, by painstaking study, he endeavors to discover and make clear. It would involve too great detail

and carry me too far from my main purpose to report here the conclusions to which this analysis has led modern students,[1] but the principle is clearly illustrated by original elements easily discernible in the Bible by the English reader. Whole books are embodied in this history; as, the Book of the Covenant in the Book of Exodus, or the larger Book of the Covenant in the Book of Deuteronomy.[2] Ancient songs are embodied in it, like the song of Deborah and Barak in the Book of Judges, or the elegy of David over Saul and Jonathan in the Book of Samuel.[3] Other books now lost are referred to by name and quoted verbatim by the Hebrew historians. There are twelve such books mentioned in the Old Testament as authority for statements made. They are: The Wars of the Lord, the Book of Jasher, the Book of Samuel concerning the Kingdom, the Book of Solomon, the Chronicles of David, the Acts of Solomon, the Acts of Nathan, Samuel, and Gad, the Book of Ahijah the Shilonite, the Visions of Iddo, the Book of Shemaiah the Prophet, the Book of Jehu, the Sayings of the Seers.[4] In some cases these books

[1] The object of the *Polychrome Bible* is to make clear to the reader by colors the different material of which scholars believe the narratives are composed. The principle applies also to other than the historical books.

[2] Exod. xx.–xxiv. 7; Deut. xii.–xxvi.

[3] Judg. v.; 2 Sam. i. 17–27.

[4] Num. xxi. 14; Josh. x. 13; 2 Sam. i. 18; 1 Sam. x. 25; 1 Kings iv. 32, 33; 1 Chron. xxvii. 24; 1 Kings xi. 41; 1 Chron. xxix. 29; 2 Chron. ix. 29; xii. 15; xx. 34; xxxiii. 19.

are simply referred to; in some there are definite and explicit quotations from them. One quotation may, perhaps, serve as well as many to illustrate the kind of use which these Hebrew historians made of preëxisting material, acknowledging their indebtedness therefor: —

"And the sun stood still, and the moon stayed, until the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies. Is not this written in the Book of Jasher? So the sun stood still in the midst of heaven, and hasted not to go down about a whole day."

This famous passage in Joshua, which has been a puzzle to so many men, is explicitly said to be quoted from a more ancient record — the Book of Jasher — which is now believed to have been an ancient war-song.[1] In addition to these are official records incorporated in the Old Testament histories. In the Book of Ezra, for example, we have a copy of what purports to be a letter sent to Darius by certain opponents of the Hebrews, seeking to secure an edict from the king to prevent the rebuilding of Jerusalem; a copy of a second letter sent by the Hebrews in reply, seeking for permission to continue the rebuilding of Jerusalem; and a copy, or what purports to be a copy, of the official edict which came back from Darius the king

[1] Josh. x. 13; compare 2 Sam. i. 18. "From these passages (and no other are extant which can be proved to be extracted from it), the general character of the book and its contents seem apparent. Both passages are unquestionably rhythmical in structure and poetical in diction." *Bible Commentary*, on Josh. x. 13.

in response.[1] It is possible, of course, that these are not copies; that they are written by the historian in his own language, and for the purpose of imparting a dramatic vigor to the narrative; but the indications are that he had access to certain official records which had come down to his time and of which he made use in telling his story.

Finally we have early traditions and popular folk-lore — songs the mothers sing to their children, stories the mothers tell their children — inserted in the narrative for the purpose of illustrating phases of life with which the historian was concerned, and which he was endeavoring to interpret to his readers. Such are the story of Balaam's ass, the Samson stories, and perhaps some of the Elisha stories.[2]

Thus a careful examination even of our English Bible makes it clear that it is composed of pre-existing material, some portions of which it is possible for us to distinguish, showing whence it came and what is its character. The difficulty of doing this is enhanced and the appearance of unity in the narrative is increased by the fact that the ancients had none of those mechanical contrivances of which we make such free use to indicate selections and quotations. Quotation marks, parentheses, footnotes, and appendices are all comparatively modern. When an editor of previous writings desired

[1] Ezra iv., v., vi.

[2] See *The Bible and its Supremacy*, by Dean Farrar, chap. xvii.; *Scriptures Hebrew and Christian*, by E. T. Bartlett, D. D., and John P. Peters, D. D., vol. ii. part 3.

to add something from some other writer, or an interpolation of his own, he had no other method of doing this than by incorporating the addition directly and immediately in the narrative, of which it henceforth became an indistinguishable portion.

How, then, the question will be asked, can we know what is true and what is false in this Hebrew history? If the historian gathered all sorts of material, — official records, popular songs, current stories, ancient documents, prehistoric legends, — and out of all this material composed his history, how can we tell what of it is trustworthy? And if we cannot tell what of it is trustworthy, if there is no unfailing standard of judgment, does not the motto, "False in one, false in all," apply? This question will perhaps press upon the honest and candid inquirer with greater force if he recalls the undoubted fact that the age in which the Bible was composed was not a critical age. John Addington Symonds, in his history, "The Renaissance in Italy," has discriminated very justly between three stages in the history of scholarship: the age of passionate desire; the age of indiscriminate acquisition; and the age of critical scholarship.[1] If, as the modern scholars believe, the historical books of the Old Testament were finally edited in their present form about the time of the Restoration, say 450 B. C., the editing took place in an era of indiscriminate acquisition, and this fact, while it lends additional sanction to the theory that the

[1] *The Age of the Despots*, by J. A. Symonds, pp. 20–22.

history of the Hebrew people, as we possess it, is a composition of earlier materials, not critically weighed and measured, does by just so much detract from its scientific accuracy as a historical record.

It might suffice in reply to quote the conclusion concerning the historical value of these ancient records recorded by one of the most radical of the modern critics, Professor C. H. Cornill. In "The Rise of the People of Israel," he says: —

"I hold the firm and well-grounded conviction that the traditions of the people of Israel itself regarding its earliest history are thoroughly historical in all essential points, and can sustain the keenest and most searching criticism. Poetic legends have, indeed, woven about those ancient traditions a misty, magic veil which charms the eye and captivates the heart, and in which lies the spell that those traditions cast over every unbiased mind. Not with rude vandal hand should we tear away this veil, but with loving care resolve it into its single threads and remove it with considerate hand, so that the original image may stand forth in its unadorned simplicity and naked chastity, and then we shall see that it is really a noble human figure, and not a mere creature of the imagination that was concealed beneath the protecting cover of this veil."

Have we not a stronger basis for our faith in all that is important in Hebrew history, after that history has been searched by one inspired by the scientific spirit who has no preconceptions in regard to its truth, and who is perfectly ready to subject

it to the same kind of searching criticism to which he will subject any other literature, and who, as the result of that searching criticism, reaches the "firm and well grounded conviction that the traditions of the people of Israel . . . are thoroughly historical in all essential points," than we could have had if there had been no such critical investigation into its historical truthfulness?

Nevertheless, I think it must be conceded by the candid student that we have no such assurance as our fathers thought they possessed as to the accuracy of the statements of *fact* of the Bible history; but it does not follow that our faith in its *truth* is any less clearly established. There is an evident and an important difference between statements of fact and statements of truth, and ignoring that difference has involved Bible students in needless perplexity. A statement which agrees with an outward and objective existence is a fact, or, more accurately, the statement of a fact; a statement which agrees with a subjective and invisible principle is a truth. Strictly speaking, truth includes fact, that is, all correct statements of fact are truth; but all truths are not facts. It is a fact that Cæsar crossed the Rubicon; it is a truth that God is love.

Now, it is a matter of absolute unimportance to us whether in all particulars the Hebrew history accords with the facts; but it is of the utmost importance for us to know whether or not its statements accord with the truth. A single illus-

tration taken from the New Testament will make this distinction clear. Whether Jesus Christ was born in Bethlehem or in Nazareth is not a question which materially affects the moral character of mankind. A man may be as good and as devout a man, and as sincere a follower of Jesus Christ, if he believes that Jesus Christ was born in Nazareth as if he believes that he was born in Bethlehem. But the question whether the life of Christ corresponds to the divine ideal, whether it is such a life that men ought to follow it, whether his character is such as corresponds to that of the Divine, the Eternal, the Invisible One — that is a profound question, the answer to which must determine the quality of the answerer's devotion and the course of his life. That is a question of truth; the other is a question of fact. It is a matter of no more concern to us to know of how many thousand men David's army was composed on some great occasion than it is for us to know how many men some Greek general had in his campaign; but whether the fundamental principles of national life are rightly interpreted by the Hebrew historian — that concerns our very life, national and individual.

History may be divided into three classes: the factual, the philosophical, and the epic. By factual history I mean history which undertakes simply to tell the facts. The writer of such history cares for nothing else. He does not inquire what the facts signify; what is their human interest; what is their moral meaning: he simply seeks to know

what is the fact, and he will sometimes spend weeks and even months in the investigation of a date, in order to secure accuracy in his facts. The official report of a department may be taken as an illustration of factual history. The head of the department is not supposed to have, though he sometimes does, any ends to serve, any lessons to teach, any interest to awaken; it is his business simply to give the statistical results of his investigation. There is not much that is philosophic or epic about the records of a census. The philosophic historian is one who is interested in facts only or chiefly because they illustrate or enforce some theory. The facts are not ends; they are simply instruments in his hands: he summons his facts as a lawyer calls his witness, that they may testify on his behalf. Few scholars would go to Buckle's "History of Civilization" to get an accurate statement of the facts of the periods with which he dealt. Buckle wished to demonstrate a certain theory of civilization, and with great ingenuity he brought together facts which would help to demonstrate his theory. He wrote a philosophical history. Somewhere between these two is what I will call epic history. The epic historian is not interested in mere fact, nor has he a philosophy or theory which he wishes to demonstrate. He is interested in certain phases of human life, and he uses the facts of history, as the dramatist uses the creations of his imagination, to interpret human life. Froude's "Life of Erasmus" is a good illustration of epic history.

The history of the ancient times was epic history. The ancient peoples did not discriminate carefully between fact and fiction, between observation and imagination, between what they had seen and what they pictured to themselves. Their poetry, therefore, is historical poetry, having its roots in history; and their history is poetical history, portrayed for the purpose of interesting their readers in certain phases of human life. Homer's Iliad we now know is based on certain facts of life far back in Greek history; the historicity of the siege of Troy has been pretty well established by Schliemann's investigations; but to what extent Homer's representation of the facts of that siege is historically accurate in detail it is impossible to determine. On the other hand, Herodotus does not hesitate to use tradition, story, fiction, myth, anything that will aid him to make interesting the story which he writes. And yet Herodotus is called the "father of history." He writes for a purpose. His purpose is not to tell exactly what has happened — his history is not factual; nor is his purpose to establish a philosophy which he desires to demonstrate — his history is not philosophic; his purpose is to illustrate certain phases of Greek life and character in which he is profoundly interested. He has stated this purpose very explicitly in the very first sentence of his history. "This," he says, "is a publication of the researches of Herodotus of Halicarnassus, in order that the actions of men may not be effaced by time, nor the great and wondrous

deeds displayed both by Greeks and barbarians deprived of renown: and amongst the rest, for what cause they waged war upon each other." This is the purpose of Herodotus's history — to make clear to all future time the renown of the Greek people.

To this class Hebrew history belongs. It is not factual history; it is not written by men who spent time and labor in securing accuracy in historical detail. They rarely give a date; the dates of Biblical history, so far as we possess them at all, have been ascertained by subsequent and more scientific historians. In some cases, as in the early history of David, two apparently incongruous accounts current in their time are incorporated in the narrative without any attempt to explain the incongruity or to harmonize the narratives. That has been left for subsequent scholars to attempt. It is clear from such facts as these that these histories are not compiled by men whose interest was in minute historical scholarship. Nor were they compiled by philosophical historians whose object it was to prove or to illustrate a theory. They do not resemble Buckle's "History of Civilization." The Hebrew was rarely a philosopher; he had few theories, and those were of the simplest description.

The Bible histories are epic histories. The historians were interested in one phase of human life — a phase which may be expressed by the single sentence, God is in his world. They believed in a living God, a God who dwelt with his people, who

guided and inspired them, who rewarded them when they did right and punished them when they did wrong, who was stronger than the strongest, and was about them as the mountains about Jerusalem. They believed in the faith of the prophets that Jehovah was able to pluck up and pull down and destroy the nation, or to build it and to plant it at his will.[1] They saw in the history of their own people the witness of this presence and power of the Living God. They wrote history, not as Buckle, to prove a theory; not as Herodotus, to preserve the memory of the great and wondrous deeds of an ancient people; not as Macaulay, to trace the rise and progress of certain political principles as embodied in a great political party; not as John Richard Green, to show the development of a great nation from small beginnings to a position of imperial influence and power; they wrote the history of the Hebrew people to exhibit the dealings of the Living God with his people and with the peoples who were related to them. It is this which gives to Biblical history its peculiar character. That history is less dramatic than Froude, less philosophic than Buckle, less scientific than Freeman, less democratic than Green, less romantic than Herodotus; but it is of all histories the most religious, because, above all other histories, ancient or modern, it endeavors to interpret the part the Living God took in the history of a peculiar people.

[1] Jer. viii. 7, 9.

It is for this reason that the Hebrew historian makes no attempt to exalt the virtues or conceal the vices of either the people or its leaders. With a frankness which has often been misinterpreted, he narrates the domestic infelicities of Abraham, the treachery of Jacob, the shortsighted statesmanship of Joseph, unconsciously preparing by a commercial monopoly for the future enslavement of his race, the passion and the penitence of Moses, the self-will of the athletic but inefficient Samson, the superstition of Jephtha, the insane jealousy of Saul, the adultery of David, the corrupt commercialism of Solomon. He is equally frank in dealing with the nation: in describing its idolatries at the foot of Sinai, its childish waywardness in the wilderness, its alternate cowardice and cruelty of conscience in the Canaanite campaigns, its abject submission to a bondage which it needed only courage to repel, its repeated degeneracies and apostasies, and its final captivity and disgrace. From the opening chapter of this composite history to the end, the subject is not Israel, nor Israel's great men, but Israel's God in his dealings with Israel. It is Jehovah who calls reluctant Moses to assume the task of emancipating Israel; Jehovah who inspires the nation with courage at the Red Sea; Jehovah who provides it with both food and guidance in the wilderness; Jehovah who gives to it the bases of its civil laws and civil liberty; Jehovah who frees it from the superstitions in which it has been reared, and into which it afterwards falls

with irritating repetitions; Jehovah who appears to Joshua and equips him with courage for his great campaigns; Jehovah who is the sole bond of union to this unorganized people during the colonial period; Jehovah who sustains Saul when Saul is loyal, and abandons him to defeat and death when he is disloyal; Jehovah who summons David from the sheepfold to the throne; Jehovah who sends prophets, from Elijah the reformer to Isaiah the statesman, to recover the people from their apostasies, and to counsel and encourage them in their national crises; Jehovah who gives them prosperity when they walk in his way, and who sends them adversity when they depart from it.

The historian does, indeed, narrate the deeds of great men; but he so narrates them that our attention is fixed, not on the man nor on the deed, but on Jehovah who inspires the man to do the deed. Moses was a great statesman, the father of civil liberty for all humanity; yet it is not of the statesman but of the prophet who walked with Jehovah that we think as we read the story of his life. David was a great organizer; the essential principles of his organization of the state into great departments and of the army into companies, regiments, and army corps we still maintain to-day, nearly thirty centuries after his death;[1] but it is not of the great organizer, but of the poet and of his experience of God in nature and men, that we think as we read the story of his life and his

[1] 2 Sam. xviii. 1, 2; 1 Chron. xxvii. 25–34.

achievements. Ahab brought Israel to a great degree of prosperity by his skill and courage as an astute statesman and a brave captain;[1] and yet it is of the sins of Ahab against God and humanity that we think as we read the story of his reign; not of his statecraft and his military achievements, but of his robbery of Naboth. In all this Biblical history the moral element predominates over the merely political, and the religious over the merely ethical. And yet the historian rarely if ever formulates a dogma or draws a moral. He writes not to prove that "righteousness exalteth a nation, and sin is a reproach to any people;" but believing that this is true, and believing that this truth is writ large in the history of his people, he so writes the history that his readers see it recorded there, not by his pen, but by the events themselves.

The question, then, for the student of Biblical history to ask, is not whether all the deeds of the heroes of Hebrew history were virtuous, whether Abraham did right to lie, or Jephtha to sacrifice his daughter, whether Samson was really a hero, or David's adultery a pardonable offense. The historian recites the virtues of men without applause, and their vices without condemnation. He draws no morals; this he leaves to be done by the conscience of the reader. The question is

[1] 1 Kings xx. See *History of Israel*, by C. A. Cornill, 102 ff.; *The Religion of Israel*, by Karl Budde, 116 ff.; Hastings's *Bible Dictionary*, tit. Ahab; *History of the Jewish Church*, by A. P. Stanley, lect. xxx.

not whether God commanded all that the ancient Hebrews thought he commanded, or approved all that they thought he approved. The historian recites their errors as well as their sins. It is not whether all the occurrences took place as they are recorded; whether Samson tied foxes or jackals together;[1] whether Elijah was fed by ravens or Arabians;[2] whether Elisha made the axe-head swim in the water.[3] The value of the history does not depend upon its scientific accuracy in detailed incidents in this remote past. The question to consider is whether the historian is right or wrong in his interpretation of human history, whether God is in his world of men, whether Jehovah is to be reckoned with in national policies, whether moral forces are to be taken account of by wise men in the world's adminstration; or whether might makes right and God is only on the side of the strong battalions. This question I do not discuss; for it is no part of the object of this volume to show that the view of life taken by the Biblical writers is correct. I only seek to show what that view is; to interpret the Old Testament, not to discuss its accuracy. To interpret it we must understand first of all the purpose of the writers; and the purpose of the historical writers of the Old Testament was not to secure infallible accuracy

[1] Judg. xv. 4.

[2] 1 Kings xvii. 4, 6. See Robert Tuck's *Handbook of Biblical Difficulties*, p. 439; Kitto's *Bible Illus.*, vol. ii. part 2, pp. 216–220.

[3] 2 Kings vi. 1–7.

in dates, numbers, statistics, and historical incidents, but to interpret their national history as Jehovah's dealing with his people. Did they interpret it aright? and does this interpretation give us a clue by which we can interpret also the history of our own times? If so, the Bible history is true, and its truth is not impugned, and not even a suspicion is cast upon its truth, by the conclusion that certain of the incidents recorded in it are unhistorical, and many of the moral judgments which it records are to be corrected in the light of a later moral development, and by the standards of a later revelation.

CHAPTER III

PREHISTORIC TRADITIONS REWRITTEN

THE principles respecting Hebrew history which were set forth and illustrated in the preceding chapter are two. The first principle is that this history is a compilation from previously existing materials, and that by careful study it is possible to distinguish in some measure these different materials, to separate the strand and show the threads of which it is composed, and that this task is made easier for us because in the latter portion of the history two of these strands are separated for us into two books — the Book of Chronicles, which is priestly or ecclesiastical, and the Book of Kings, which is prophetic. The second principle is that this history is not factual nor philosophical, but epic; that it is not compiled by a scientific student whose aim it is to give accurate information as to details, nor by a philosophical thinker whose aim it is to enforce a theory of human life, but by a prophetic or poetic or dramatic writer, who uses the material which he finds ready to his hand for the purpose of illustrating a certain phase or aspect of human life, namely, that aspect which presents itself to one who believes that God is in his world

of men, and who in his observation of the course of human events looks for the indications of a divine presence guiding and directing them. The historical book of the Bible which affords, if not the most striking illustration of these two principles, at least the illustration most apparent to the English reader, is the Book of Genesis; and this for three reasons: first, because the narratives which that book contains appear on their face to be epic or dramatic rather than factual; second, because we are able easily to separate the narratives of which the book is composed, and to show that there are two or more not always consistent accounts of the same events; and, third, because the researches of archæologists have discovered in other and admittedly older literature the materials of which the narratives might easily have been composed.[1]

[1] The student who wishes to pursue more fully the study of the question whether the historical books were written by one author, or were compiled from a variety of documentary and traditional sources by an editor or editors, will find material for the purpose in the following volumes: *An Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament*, by S. R. Driver, D. D.; the best book in the English language, so far as I know, to give the student the results of modern scholarship in its analysis of the Old Testament. *The Genesis of Genesis* and *The Triple Tradition of Exodus*, by Professor B. W. Bacon, D. D., of the Yale Theological Seminary, which give analyses of these two books into their supposed constituent parts. *The Beginnings of History according to the Bible and the Traditions of Oriental Peoples*, by Francis Lenormant, Professor of Archæology at the National Library of France; to this and the following volume I am indebted for the parallel traced in this chapter between the Genesis tradition and one of the Assyrian

An early tradition, still regarded as trustworthy by the traditional school of Biblical critics, attributes the Book of Genesis to Moses.[1] If we were

tablets. *The Chaldæan Account of Genesis*, by George Smith of the Department of Oriental Antiquities in the British Museum. *Encyclopædia Britannica*, article Pentateuch, by J. Wellhausen, Professor of Oriental Languages, University of Halle. For the view of those who maintain the single and Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch the reader is referred to *The Unity of the Book of Genesis* and the *Higher Criticism of the Pentateuch*, by William Henry Green, D. D., LL. D., Professor of Oriental and Old Testament Literature in Princeton Theological Seminary, who, at the time of his death, was the ablest representative in this country of the traditional school. See, also, *The Veracity of the Hexateuch*, by Samuel C. Bartlett, D. D., LL. D., late President of Dartmouth College; *The New Testament under Fire*, by A. J. F. Behrends, D. D.; and *Anti-Higher Criticism*, edited by L. W. Munhall, M. A. The two latter are general in their character, and are not confined, as are the others, to the problems of the Pentateuch.

[1] "Is the Pentateuch the work of Moses? It is universally conceded that this was the traditional opinion among the Jews. To this the New Testament bears the most abundant and explicit testimony." In support of this Dr. Green refers to the following New Testament passages: "The Pentateuch is by our Lord called 'the book of Moses' (Mark xii. 26); when it is read and preached the Apostles say that Moses is read (2 Cor. iii. 15) and preached (Acts xv. 21). The Pentateuch and the books of the prophets, which were read in the worship of the synagogue, are called, both by our Lord (Luke xvi. 29, 31) and the Evangelists (Luke xxiv. 27), 'Moses and the prophets' or 'the law of Moses and the prophets' (Luke xxiv. 44; Acts xxviii. 23). Of the injunctions of the Pentateuch not only do the Jews say, when addressing our Lord, 'Moses commanded' (John viii. 5), but our Lord repeatedly uses the same form of speech (Matt. viii. 4; xix. 7, 8; Mark i. 44; x. 3; Luke v. 14), as testified by three of the Evangelists. Of the law in general he says, 'Moses gave the law' (John vii. 19), and the Evangelist echoes, 'the law was given by Moses' (John i. 17). And that Moses was not only the author of the law, but committed its precepts to writing, is affirmed by

to suppose that this tradition is correct, and that the traditional Biblical chronology were substantially accurate, then the Book of Genesis was written about 1450 B. C. But, still supposing the traditional chronology to be correct, this book deals with a period of from two to twenty-five centuries

the Jews (Mark xii. 19), and also by our Lord (Mark x. 5), who further speaks of him as writing predictions respecting himself (John v. 46, 47), and also traces a narrative in the Pentateuchal history to him (Mark xii. 26)." *The Higher Criticism of the Pentateuch*, by William Henry Green, D. D., LL. D., pp. 32, 33. On the other hand, so orthodox a critic as Dr. Franz Delitsch declares that these references by Christ to the books of Moses are not conclusive on the question of authorship. He says (*A New Commentary on Genesis*, vol. i. p. 21), "In the N. T. also the Pentateuch is called 'the book of Moses' (Mark xii. 26), or just 'Moses' (Acts xv. 21; 2 Cor. iii. 15); and when injunctions or sayings are quoted from it (*e. g.* from Exodus, Luke xx. 37; Leviticus, Mark i. 44, Rom. x. 5; Deuteronomy, Mark xii. 19, Rom. x. 19) Moses is named as the speaker and writer. For our Lord and his apostles conceive of the Thorah as might be expected of them as members of their nation: it is to them the work of Moses. They regard it as proceeding from the revelation of God. But it is not yet God's full and final revelation, hence they intentionally emphasize the human side of its origin, without regard to the directness or indirectness of the authorship of Moses, which lay outside their exalted and practical object, and was, moreover, alien to the character of their age. It is important to us that they too were penetrated by the conviction that Moses was the mediator of the law through which Israel became the people of God; but historico-critical investigation as to his share as author in the composition of the Pentateuch is left free, as far as N. T. statements are concerned." For at least three centuries the Mosaic authorship of parts of the Pentateuch has been in dispute. Spinoza, writing early in the seventeenth century (*Spinoza's Works;* Tractatus Theologico-Politicus, chap. viii.), pointed out features in the Pentateuch that seem irreconcilable with the theory of Mosaic authorship.

prior to Moses.[1] Thus, even if we accept the tradition which attributes the authorship of the Book of Genesis to Moses, he has recorded in it events which occurred from two to twenty-five centuries before his time. The question, therefore, that necessarily presents itself to the thoughtful reader is, How did he learn the facts the history of which he narrates? Of course we may suppose that they were supernaturally revealed to him.[2] But there is nothing in the narrative to suggest this supposition, unless it be the fact that we can conceive no other way in which he could have received infallible information concerning such events as the creation of the world and the deluge. The writer does not claim that his narrative is a revelation; nor is this claim made for him by any subsequent Biblical writer. He does not say, as do the later prophets, "Thus saith the Lord"; nor does any subsequent sacred writer affirm concerning these Genesis narratives that "the Lord spake unto Moses, saying." The only other opinion open to us is that the writer or compiler of Genesis availed himself of such material as existed in his time, and

[1] The creation is put in the popular chronology at 4004 B. C., the deluge at 2948, the call of Abraham at 1922, the death of Joseph at 1688. Of course to the modern scholar these dates are almost wholly hypothetical, but that centuries elapsed between the event, whatever it was, which gave rise to the narrative of the deluge, and the writing of the narrative, is questioned by none.

[2] For an admirable pictorial representation of the way in which the story of the Creation might have been revealed to Moses, see Hugh Miller's *Testimony of the Rocks*, lecture iv.: The Mosaic Vision of Creation.

that he used it with greater or less scientific and critical discrimination in preparing his history of this prehistoric period.

It is true that it has been suggested that the actors in the events recorded in Genesis wrote accounts of those events, and that these narratives written by contemporaries and eyewitnesses were handed down from generation to generation until they came into the hands of Moses. When this hypothetical process of autobiography began, it is impossible even to surmise. It must suffice here to say that, even if we were to suppose that writing was an art known to Adam, and that this hypothetical collection of manuscript biographies began with him, we should get as a result only one form of a documentary hypothesis, since upon this theory the Book of Genesis would be compiled from preexisting documents, which, on the possible but certainly unsubstantiated theory, had been with an almost miraculous care prepared and preserved for the use of the final editor. It is thus, even on the hypothesis of the traditionalist, almost certain that the Book of Genesis is composed of preëxisting materials. It is scarcely necessary to add that he who disregards ancient tradition as of little scientific authority does not think that the Book of Genesis was written by Moses. He puts it at a much later date than 1450 B. C. I am inclined to think that it was the last written of the historical books of the Old Testament; that, after the history of the ancient Hebrews, which begins with the

Exodus and ends with the Restoration, had been substantially completed, the Book of Genesis, or the Book of Origins, — for such is the meaning of the word, — was compiled by some unknown editor as an introduction to the history which he or some one before him had compiled ; and that in so doing he rewrote the current traditions of this prehistoric period, much as Alfred Tennyson rewrote the Arthurian legends in the " Idylls of the King "; and that he did this for the purpose of emphasizing the truth that God is in his world. Not in any scientific accuracy in the narratives, are we to look for the evidence of prophetic inspiration, but in their witness to the faith of this prophetic people in the presence and rule of God in his world. And that inspiration is equally to be discerned in the narrative, whether we suppose it is composed of autobiographies by eye-witnesses or of current myths and legends, whether it was compiled by Moses about somewhere between 1250 B. C. and 1450 B. C. or by an unknown prophet six, eight, or ten centuries later.[1]

[1] " The first chapters of Genesis constitute a ' Book of the Beginnings,' in accordance with the stories handed down in Israel from generation to generation, ever since the times of the Patriarchs, which, in all its essential affirmations, is parallel with the statements of the sacred books from the banks of the Euphrates and Tigris. But, if this is so, I shall perhaps be asked, where then do you find the divine inspiration of the writers who made this *archæology* — that supernatural help by which, as a Christian, you must believe them to have been guided ? Where ? In the absolutely new spirit which animates their narration, even though the form of it may have remained in almost every respect the same as

It seems, then, certain that, by whomsoever the Book of Genesis was compiled, it is composed of material which this compiler found ready to his hand. What is the character of this material? Was it composed by contemporaneous historians? and is its value in its scientific accuracy? Or did it grow up out of the observation, the imagination, and the thought of the race? and is its value in the moral lessons of which it is the vehicle? In endeavoring to find the answer to these questions, let us turn, in the first place, to the narratives themselves.

The first chapter of Genesis gives an account of the creation of the world. It is "a sublime epic of creation," a "hymn of praise to the Creator."

among the neighboring nations. It is the same narrative, and in it the same episodes succeed one another in like manner; and yet one would be blind not to perceive that the signification has become altogether different. The exuberant polytheism which encumbers these stories among the Chaldæans has been carefully eliminated, to give place to the severest monotheism. What formerly expressed naturalistic conceptions of a singular grossness here becomes the garb of moral truths of the most exalted and most purely spiritual order. The essential features of the form of the tradition have been preserved, and yet between the Bible and the sacred books of Chaldæa there is all the distance of one of the most tremendous revolutions which have ever been effected in human beliefs. Herein consists the miracle, and it is none the less amazing for being transposed. Others may seek to explain this by the simple natural progress of the conscience of humanity; for myself, I do not hesitate to find in it the effect of a supernatural intervention of Divine Providence, and I bow before the God who inspired the Law and the Prophets." *The Beginnings of History*, by François Lenormant, preface, pp. xvi., xvii.

A comparison of this chapter with such passages as Psalm xxxiii. 6–8; civ.; or Prov. viii. 24–30, will make clear to the English reader its poetical character. Its language is not scientific, accurate, technical; it is figurative, poetic, the language of imagination. God broods upon the face of the water like a wind playing upon its surface; he calls, and light comes forth out of the darkness; he gives proper names to both light and darkness, calls one Day, the other Night; he erects a firmament[1] to divide the waters above from the waters beneath; he again divides the waters below from the land, and gives proper names to both earth and seas; he speaks, and in the heavens above lights appear to illumine the earth. All this is language of poetry and of picture; this is no scientific treatise or cosmogony; it is a poet's sublime epic; a pæan to the Creator of the world.[2] Whether it agrees

[1] See Ruskin's *Modern Painters*, part v. chapter vi.

[2] "Sometimes the prose of the Bible is equal to the best poetry, and blends truth and beauty in perfect harmony. It approaches also, in touching the highest themes, the rythmical form of Hebrew poetry, and may be arranged according to the parallelism of members. Moses was a poet as well as a historian. . . . In this wider sense the Bible begins and ends with poetry. The retrospective vision of the first creation, and the prospective vision of the new heavens and new earth, are presented in language which rises to the summit of poetic beauty and power." *Commentary on the Holy Scriptures*, by J. P. Lange, vol. vii. of Old Testament, on Job; from *Gen. Int. to the Poetical Books*, by Philip Schaff, p. ix.

"This sublime Epic of Creation, with its boldly figurative imagery and poetic grandeur of conception and expression, has been subjected to a style of interpretation, suited only to a plain

with the latest conclusions of scientists concerning the order of the processes of evolution by which the world was developed from star-dust is a question as little pertinent to the chapter as would be the question whether geographical exploration indicates any locality for the Purgatory and the Paradise of Dante.[1]

The second and third chapters, containing accounts of the creation and fall of man, are equally characterized, not by the spirit of a scientific investigator into the problems of anthropology, but by a naïve, childlike, and yet divine imagination. Man is fashioned, sculptor-like, out of clay, and a breath of life is breathed into him. The animals are brought to him to be named; among them all there is no one fit to be a companion to him. So, while he sleeps, a rib is taken from him,[2] and from the

and literal record of the ordinary occurrences of life. Hence not only its true spirit, but its profound teachings, have been misconceived and misinterpreted; and its exhibition of the mysteries of creative power, which science traces in its own observation of Nature, have been confounded with popular misapprehensions, irreconcilable with the well-known facts of science." *The Book of Genesis, with Explanatory Notes*, by Thomas J. Conant, p. xvi.

[1] The correspondence is undoubtedly extraordinary — "Every great feature in the structure of the planet corresponds with the order of events narrated in the sacred history." Professor Silliman, *Outline of Geological Lectures* appended to *Bakewell's Geology*, p. 67, note. But as an exact scientific account of the creation it is not, in all minor details, strictly accurate. See *Science and Hebrew Tradition*, essays iv. and v., T. H. Huxley.

[2] The poetic character of this conception is artistically illustrated by Ghiberti in the bronze doors at Florence, in which he represents the angels bringing Eve to the Creator, from Adam's

rib a woman is formed. Husband and wife, they are put into a garden; the great world lies outside. In the garden are two trees of which they may not eat. The fruit of one will give them a knowledge of good and evil; the fruit of the other will endow them with immortality. A serpent comes into the garden, not crawling on his belly, but erect — though how erect it is difficult to conceive. He persuades the too confiding woman; she persuades the too pliant man; they both eat the fruit of the first tree, discover that they are naked, lose their childhood innocence, are ashamed, make for themselves aprons, are afraid of their God whose voice they hear in the cool of the evening as he walks in the garden, and try to hide themselves from him among the trees. Like children discovered in a fault, they come when summoned, excuse themselves in vain by casting the fault, the man on the woman, the woman on the serpent, and are cast out from the garden because they have become as a god by knowing good and evil, and lest they become still more as a god by being immortal. How this garden is so fenced in from the outer world that neither they nor their descendants can ever return to it, nor even discover where it is, is left to conjecture, as surely no scientific writer would have left it. The garden disappears absolutely from the face of the earth, and never again is mentioned in

side. See Mrs. Jameson's *History of our Lord in Art*, i. 96, 97. As poetry the idea is beautiful; as history, both incredible and repulsive.

the sacred history, or in any other. The man and his wife go out into the wilderness to fight life's battle with thistle-bearing nature; children are born to them; cities are discovered in the wilderness: whence come they? Cain is married: where did he get his wife? The question is an oft-repeated one — foolish if this story is imagination, not foolish if it is or purports to be a scientific history of the origin of the human race.

It is absolutely certain that if one were to come upon this story in Greek, Latin, or Scandinavian literature, one would not hesitate a moment how to classify it. This, he would say, is a myth of wonderful beauty: What is its significance? What does it mean? The scientific or literary student of the Old Testament sees no reason for refusing to apply the same standards to this story in Hebrew literature which he would apply if he found it in any other. He reaches without hesitation the same conclusion, and addresses himself to the same question: Why did the writer tell this story? What life-lesson is it intended to convey? To him it is like Tennyson's story of the Holy Grail. As in the one case he wastes no time in answering the question whether the cup out of which Christ drank was still in existence in Arthur's time, or whether, if it were, a search for it would be profitable, but in the poem sees a beautiful vehicle of a yet more beautiful spiritual lesson, so in this prose-poem of the first sin and its consequences he sees no history of the origin of evil, no philosophy of sin and its

historic cause, nor does he care to inquire where was this fabled garden of innocence, or how, scientifically, one fruit could possibly endow with immortality a human body or another fruit could endow with godlike knowledge of moral distinctions a human soul; he sees in the story a casket, opens it, and finds within a portraiture of the life-drama of sin, fall, and redemption in miniature.

The same epic character is scarcely less apparent in the rest of Genesis, which is composed of a series of narratives the value of which depends, not upon their scientific answer to historical problems, but upon their naïve dramatic quality and their vital human interest. Such are its stories of the marriage of the sons of God to the daughters of men; of the deluge, in the mind of the narrator clearly overspreading the whole habitable globe; of an ark large enough and seaworthy enough to contain specimens of the whole animal race, who for seven months live in accord, a happy family; of Abraham receiving Jehovah's angelic messengers and feeding them at his tent; of Jacob with his treachery to his father and its penalty, with his romantic courtship and its reward; of Joseph, the dreamer, in the pit, in the prison, in the palace. These stories we study, not for the purpose of securing historical data on which we can rely with unfailing certainty, but for the interest which they awaken and for the life-lessons which they convey. They are neither factual nor philosophical; neither written to give scientific information concerning

the past nor to bear witness to some philosophical theory which the writer desires to maintain; they are written by one interested in life and for the purpose of conveying to others the interest which he himself possesses.

Thus the literary or scientific student of the Bible finds in the Book of Genesis a clear illustration and a cogent confirmation of the principles which I have stated in the preceding chapter. He finds this book composed of narratives which are epic or dramatic in their character, and it is quite clear that these narratives existed in some form long prior to the earliest date at which the Book of Genesis could have been composed or compiled.

But, further than this, his analysis makes clear to him the constituent elements of which the book is compiled. It shows him unmistakably in many instances that the narrative which he reads in the book is composed of two or more narratives, which previously existed, and which have been harmonized and woven together in one narrative by the editor or author of Genesis. That there are two such accounts of the creation will appear evident to most readers of the English Bible. The first account, contained in the first chapter and the first three verses of the second chapter, lays stress on the creation of the physical globe, represents God as creating man, male and female, in one act of creation, as making subject to them the powers of nature and the various animal races, and as consecrating the seventh or Sabbath day at the close of

the whole creative period. The second account, beginning with the fourth verse of the second chapter of Genesis, passes by the creation of the heavens and the earth with a mere allusion, gives in detail the creation of man, represents the creation of woman as a companion for man as a subsequent event, if not an afterthought, and makes this whole story introductory to the drama of a first sin and the consequent expulsion from the garden.

It is not equally apparent to the casual student that there are two accounts of the deluge, because those two accounts have been by the editor woven into one; but modern scholars have shown that it is possible to separate this narrative into its constituent parts. If they have not proved that the narrative is composed of two preëxisting narratives, they have at least demonstrated that it may have been so composed. I can best exhibit this demonstration by repeating here the two stories of the deluge, as the modern scholar discovers them in the one story which we now possess: [1]

ELOHIST NARRATIVE OF THE DELUGE

These are the generations of Noah. Noah was a righteous man, (and) perfect in his generations: Noah walked with God. And Noah begat three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth. And the earth was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence. And God

[1] These two accounts are taken from the Analysis of Genesis in *Genesis of Genesis*, Professor B. W. Bacon, p. 109.

saw the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth.

And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth. Make thee an ark of gopher wood: rooms shalt thou make in the ark, and shalt pitch it within and without with pitch. And this is how thou shalt make it: The length of the ark three hundred cubits, the breadth of it fifty cubits, and the height of it thirty cubits. A light shalt thou make to the ark, and to a cubit shalt thou finish it upward; and the door of the ark shalt thou set in the side thereof; with lower, second, and third stories shalt thou make it. And I, behold, I do bring the flood of waters upon the earth, to destroy all flesh, wherein is the breath of life, from under the heaven; everything that is in the earth shall die. But I will establish my covenant with thee; and thou shalt come into the ark, thou, and thy sons, and thy wife, and thy sons' wives with thee. And of every living thing of all flesh, two of every sort shalt thou bring into the ark, to keep them alive with thee; they shall be male and female. Of the fowl after their kind, and of the cattle after their kind, of every creeping thing of the ground after its kind, two of every sort shall come unto thee to keep them alive. And take thou unto thee of all food that is eaten, and gather it to thee; and it shall be for food for thee, and for them. Thus did Noah; according to all that God commanded him, so did he.

And Noah was six hundred years old when the flood of waters was upon the earth.

In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second

month, on the seventeenth day of the month, on the same day were all the fountains of the great deep broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened.

In the self-same day entered Noah, and Shem, and Ham, and Japheth, the sons of Noah, and Noah's wife, and the three wives of his sons with them, into the ark; they, and every beast after its kind, and all the cattle after their kind, and every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth after its kind, and every fowl after its kind, every bird of every sort. And they went in unto Noah into the ark, two and two of all flesh wherein is the breath of life. And they that went in, went in male and female of all flesh, as God commanded him: And the flood was forty days upon the earth. And the waters prevailed, and increased greatly upon the earth; and the ark went upon the face of the waters. And the waters prevailed exceedingly upon the earth; and all the high mountains that were under the whole heaven were covered. Fifteen cubits upward did the water prevail; and the mountains were covered. And all flesh died that moved upon the earth, both fowl, and cattle, and beast, and every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth, and every man. And the waters prevailed upon the earth an hundred and fifty days.

JAHVIST NARRATIVE OF THE DELUGE

And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the ground, and daughters were born unto them, that the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all that they chose. And Jahweh said, My spirit shall not strive with man forever, for that he also is flesh: yet shall his days be an hundred and twenty years. The

Nephilim were in the earth in those days, and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them: the same were the mighty men which were of old, the men of renown. And Jahweh saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And it repented Jahweh that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart. And Jahweh said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the ground; both man, and beast, and creeping thing, and fowl of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them. But Noah found grace in the eyes of Jahweh.

And Jahweh said unto Noah, Come thou and all thy house into the ark; for thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation. Of every clean beast thou shalt take to thee seven and seven, the male and his female; and of the beasts that are not clean two, the male and his female; of the fowl also of the air, seven and seven, male and female: to keep seed alive upon the face of all the earth. For yet seven days, and I will cause it to rain upon the earth forty days and forty nights; and every living thing that I have made will I destroy from off the face of the ground. And Noah did according unto all that Jahweh commanded him.

And Noah went in, and his sons, and his wife, and his sons' wives with him, into the ark, because of the waters of the flood. Of clean beasts, and of beasts that are not clean, and of fowls, and of everything that creepeth upon the ground, there went in two and two unto Noah into the ark, male and female, as God commanded Noah. And Jahweh shut him in. And it came

to pass, after the seven days, that the waters of the flood were upon the earth. And the rain was upon the earth forty days and forty nights. And the waters increased, and bare up the ark, and it was lift up above the earth. All in whose nostrils was the breath of life, of all that was in the dry land, died. And every living thing was destroyed which was upon the face of the ground, both men, and cattle, and creeping thing, and fowl of the heaven; and they were destroyed from the earth; and Noah only was left, and they that were with him in the ark.

So complete are these two accounts that it is probable that if on a Sunday morning any clergyman were to read either one from the Bible, a considerable proportion of his congregation would not know that he had not read the entire Biblical account. And yet in these parallel narratives, as here printed, nothing in either account is borrowed from the other; both are to be found entire in the one Biblical narrative. It is true, as I have said, that this fact does not demonstrate that the Biblical narrative was in fact composed of two independent and preëxistent narratives; it only demonstrates that it may have been so composed.[1] But when we reflect that there are clearly two accounts of the creation; that the subsequent history in the Bible can be separated into two narratives, much

[1] Professor William Henry Green of Princeton has ingeniously analysed the parable of the Prodigal Son into two continuous narratives, in order to show that the possibility of such a division of a continuous narrative is not of itself a demonstration of its composite character. See *Anti-Higher Criticism*, p. 66.

as the story of the deluge is here separated, though not generally as clearly; that the separation is made for us by the historians themselves in the later history of Israel, in the Books of Kings and of Chronicles; that throughout the entire Biblical history the distinctions notable in these narratives can be discerned; that one is characterized by the priestly and the other by the prophetic spirit; that it is by such compilations that most Oriental histories are composed; and that, finally, there is only the traditional belief as to the origin and authorship of the Biblical books to counteract these cumulative considerations — if we adopt the literary or scientific method of Bible study, we shall almost certainly accept the conclusion of the modern or scientific student that the Bible narratives, as we now possess them, have been composed in the manner here illustrated from preëxisting material, though the preëxisting material cannot always be as easily discriminated as in these early Genesis narratives.

This opinion is further confirmed by the fact that the archæologists have discovered, in a literature which dates prior to the time of Moses, accounts of the creation, the temptation and fall of man, the tower of Babel and consequent dispersion, and the Deluge, which differ very radically in their spirit, but not very radically in their historical or scientific details, from the Genesis accounts. From data not necessary to go into here, the scholars fix the date of the Assyrian tablets containing these

legends as from 1500 B. C. to 2000 B. C.[1] Similar accounts, dating so far back in history that their age is wholly problematical, are to be found in the tradition of other nations. One legend copied here from an Assyrian tablet, as deciphered by George Smith, may suffice as an illustration of this prehistoric material of other nations, much of which was certainly in existence before the time when Genesis could have been written.

THE ASSYRIAN STORY OF THE DELUGE

1. The surface of the earth is swept.
2. It destroyed all life from the face of the earth.
3. The strong deluge over the people reached to heaven.
4. Brother saw not his brother, they did not know the people. In heaven
5. the gods feared the tempest and
6. sought refuge; they ascended to the heaven of Anu.
7. The gods like dogs in droves prostrate.
19. Six days and nights
20. passed, the wind, deluge, and storm overwhelmed.
21. On the seventh day in its course was calmed the storm and all the deluge
22. which had destroyed like an earthquake,
23. quieted. The sea he caused to dry, and the wind and deluge ended.
24. I perceived the sea making a tossing;
25. and the whole of mankind turned to corruption,
26. like reeds the corpses floated.

[1] See *The Chaldæan Account of Genesis*, by George Smith, chaps. i. and ii.

27. I opened the window, and the light broke over my face.

28. it passed. I sat down and wept.

38. I sent forth a dove and it left. The dove went and turned, and

39. a resting-place it did not find, and it returned.

40. I sent forth a swallow and it left. The swallow went and turned, and

41. a resting-place it did not find, and it returned.

42. I sent forth a raven and it left.

43. The raven went, and the decrease of the water it saw, and

44. It did eat, it swam and wandered away, and did not return.

45. I sent the animals forth to the four winds, I poured out a libation.

46. I built an altar on the peak of the mountain.

The careful reader will discern in this narrative the historical resemblance and the spiritual contrast to the narrative in Genesis. In both are the flood, the earthquake, the wholesale destruction of life, the dove, the raven, the mountain peak, the altar, and the sacrifice; and it may be assumed that in the hiatus between line 7 and line 19 in the Assyrian account there has been some reference to a boat or ark in which the narrator has been preserved and from which he subsequently sends forth the birds. But, on the other hand, in the Hebrew account God sends the flood upon the earth as a punishment for sin; in the Assyrian account the moral element appears to be wholly lacking, and

the gods themselves flee terrified to the heavens for refuge from the storm which they cannot control. It is in this spiritual significance of the narrative, not in its scientific or historical accuracy, that its value inheres. The hypothesis that the unknown writer of Genesis took these early legends and rewrote them, writing God into them, or that the people retold them with the national consciousness of God wrought into them, is far more probable and quite as spiritual as the hypothesis that these narratives were supernaturally revealed to the historian, or that they were miraculously preserved and handed down from generation to generation until they reached him as an infallible record of events long anterior.

Why should we think that the Hebrew prehistoric history is not composed like the prehistoric history of all other peoples of legends and myths? It appears to be. Is there anything in the use of legend and myth to cast discredit on the spiritual value of this Book of Origins? What is legend? What is myth?

A legend is a non-historical narrative handed down through the early ages by word of mouth. It invariably has some historical basis; but imagination has so modified, ornamented, and perhaps exaggerated it that it is generally impossible to determine accurately how much of fact and how much of unconscious fiction enters into it. It is not, indeed, without historical value. "Tradition," says Professor Karl Budde, "in numberless cases

clothes genuine history in forms which at first sight appear to deserve no confidence at all. The task of the historian is first of all to understand the tradition. When it is correctly understood, he will not throw it away, but will make use of it in the proper sense and in the proper place. In this way tradition is transformed into history." [1] Nevertheless, the value of the legends of an ancient people is not in the accuracy of the narrative. Is it true that Alfred the Great had his ears boxed because he did not turn the scone when it was sufficiently baked? We do not know. But the story could not have arisen concerning Alfred the Great except in a community which had within itself the elements of that democratic character which has characterized the Anglo-Saxon people in all ages of the world. Did William Tell shoot the arrow from his son's head? Probably not. But the story could not have arisen except among a people loving independence and daring everything to win and maintain it. Did Pocahontas save the life of John Smith by throwing herself prostrate upon him? We cannot now tell. But there is in the story a precursor of that cosmopolitan character overrunning all lines of race and religion which has characterized the American people in its history from that time to this. These legends of an early date indicate the character of the people, and in this lies their value. It is in this that the value of

[1] *Religion of Israel to the Exile*, by Professor Karl Budde, Lecture i. p. 2.

the Hebrew legends lies. They are not scientific records of an age so remote that no scientific investigation can give us trustworthy historical information concerning it; but they are indications that the spiritual temper of this people characterized their earliest consciousness as it is manifested in these stories of their prehistoric life.

The myth, on the other hand, is the attempt of a primitive people to state an abstract truth in a concrete form. For primitive people, like children, cannot conceive an abstract truth; they can conceive only in concrete illustration. Sometimes to express such truth they take a legend, pour the truth into it, and it becomes a mythical legend; sometimes they invent the story to interpret the truth — it is then a mythical poem or fiction. The Greeks wished to express the truth that love is rich in itself, but poor in its possessions. Love, they said, has Resource for his father and Poverty for his mother.

"Love then, as being the child of Poverty and Resource, has a strange fate. He is always poor; and so far from being delicate and fair, as most people suppose, is rough and squalid, unsandaled and homeless, sleeping upon the bare earth beneath the open sky, and, according to his mother's nature, is always mated to want. But, on the other hand, as he takes after his father, he aims at the beautiful and the good, and is brave, vigorous, and energetic, clever in the pursuit of his object, skillful in invention, passionately fond of knowledge, and fertile in resource, unceasingly devoted to the search

after wisdom, and withal an inveterate trickster, charlatan, and sophist." [1]

This is a myth. The philosophic moralist of today would say, Love has no promise of the outer world, but has resources within itself; the Greek said, Poverty and Resource married; Love was born to them, and inherited poverty from the one and resource from the other.

Three great problems have confronted men from the earliest ages: the origin of the cosmos; the cause of the differences in human character and condition, including the problem of sin and its consequences; and the future destiny of man. The modern philosopher gives his answers to these questions in abstract form; the primitive peoples, in concrete narratives. Our answers are philosophy; theirs were myths. Such myths are generally unconscious growths; Plato furnishes an illustration of the method of their growth by his naïve and probably not serious plan for manufacturing one. He says: —

"All ye who are in the State, we will say to them following out our fiction, are brethren; but God when he moulded you, at the time of your birth, mixed gold in the substance of all you who were fit to rule, and therefore they are the most honored. He infused silver in the military caste, iron and bronze in the husbandmen and craftsmen generally. The offspring of these several classes will, as a general rule, preserve the character

[1] From The Symposium of Plato as rendered by Bishop Westcott in *The History of Religious Thought in the West*, pp. 7, 8.

of their parents. But if the signs of silver or gold appear in the children of the bronze or iron castes, they must then be raised to their due places. And if bronze or iron appear where we look for gold, that too must be reduced to its proper rank."

He adds: —

"We shall not persuade the first generation that it is so, but it may be in time that their descendants will believe our tale. And the belief would contribute greatly to the good of the State and to the good of one another." [1]

The early history of all peoples is in legends; the early philosophy of all peoples is in myths. There is no reason to believe that the Hebrew people are any exception to this otherwise universal rule. When the literary critic says that the Book of Genesis is a collection of legends and myths, he does not stigmatize it as valueless.[2] He affirms

[1] Ibid., pp. 9, 10.

[2] Bishop Westcott points out the providential use of the myth, and indirectly indicates that it might well be used as a vehicle for the conveyance of divine truth in a divinely inspired writing. From his suggestive essay on *The Myths of Plato*, above referred to, which is well worthy of the student's careful reading, I quote a few sentences. "Thus there are two problems with which the Platonic myths deal, the origin and destiny of cosmos, and the origin and destiny of man. Both problems obviously transcend all experience and all logical processes of reason. But no less both are ever present to the student of life, though he may neglect them in the investigation of details or deliberately set them aside as hopelessly insoluble" (p. 11). "Whatever may be the prevailing fashion of an age, the Myths of Plato remain an unfailing testimony to the religious wants of man. They show not only that reason by its logical processes is unable to satisfy them, but also in what directions its weakness is most apparent and least support-

that its value lies, not in the historical or scientific accuracy of its stories, but in the indications which they afford of the pre-natal character of this Hebrew people, and in the spiritual truths of which these stories are the vehicle. What these indications are, what that truth is, I have already indicated. The story of creation is not a scientific treatise on cosmogony. When neighboring peoples deified nature, worshiping the sun and moon and stars, the birds and beasts, the sacred river Nile, the cattle that browsed upon its shore, the crocodiles that swam in its waters, and the very beetles which crawled along its banks, the Hebrew myth of creation embodied the truth that God is Spirit, and Spirit is creative; that God has made man in his own image; that of created beings man alone is divine; and that nature, which by pagan religions men were taught abjectly to worship, is man's serf whom he is to tame, harness, and make do his bidding. The Hebrew myth of Eden embodied the truth that sin is willful disobedience of law; that conscience makes cowards of us all; that between sin and the human soul is to be eternal and undying hate; that sin will corrupt the

able. They form, as it were, a natural scheme of the questions with which a revelation might be expected to deal, — Creation, Providence, Immortality, — which as they lie farthest from the reason, lie nearest to the heart. And in doing this, they are so far an unconscious prophecy of which the teaching of Christianity is the fulfillment. . . . But more than this: the Myths mark also the shape which a revelation for men might be expected to take. The doctrine is conveyed in an historic form: the ideas are offered as facts; the myth itself is the message" (ibid., pp. 48, 49).

whole human race, but that the human race will destroy sin, or, to relate it in the language of the myth, the serpent shall poison the heel of man, and man shall crush the serpent's head. The Hebrew myth of the expulsion from the garden embodied the truth that sorrow is disciplinary, and the road from the garden of innocence to the victory of virtue is through the struggle of the wilderness. The Hebrew myth of the deluge embodied the truth that destruction of sinners can never cure the world of sin. The Hebrew myth of Abraham taught the truth that he who seeks God shall find him, and that to find him no sacrifice of home or friends or child is or can be too great; the Hebrew myth of Jacob, that God is the God of sinner as well as of saint, and remembers his mercies unto children's children of such as love him and keep his commandments; the myth of Joseph, that he is the Providence of all who put their trust in him — God in Egypt as in the Holy Land, in Pharaoh's prison and Pharaoh's palace, God of gods and Lord of lords.

This ancient compilation of prehistoric myths and legends is valuable, not because of any scientific addition which it makes to our knowledge of early history, but because it shows us the consciousness of God in the early experiences of that remarkable people to whom more than to all other peoples combined the world owes its knowledge of God, its standards of righteousness, and its impulse to the divine life.

CHAPTER IV

THE BOOK OF THE COVENANT

It is a common belief among primitive peoples that their code of laws was dictated to the lawgivers by a god or the gods. This seems to have been the opinion of the ancient Hebrews concerning their system of laws contained in the Books of Exodus, Numbers, Leviticus, and Deuteronomy. That opinion has passed over into the Christian Church, where it has been widely held that this entire code, with all its complex regulations respecting both civil life and ecclesiastical offices, was given by Jehovah to Moses and reduced by him to writing. According to this view, the entire code, civil and ecclesiastical, dates from about 1450 B. C.[1] References in these codes to conditions that did not exist until long after the death of Moses are supposed to have been prophetic and preparatory for conditions yet to come. Some of the scholars of the olden time even maintained that the account of the death of Moses, contained in the last chapter of Deuteronomy, was written by Moses prophetically before the death occurred, though no one, I think,

[1] Or according to modern chronology 1250 B. C. See chronological table on page xi.

any longer entertains that opinion. It is generally conceded by the most conservative critics that this postlude to the book, and perhaps some other special provisions scattered through the Pentateuch which are wholly inapplicable to the nomadic life of the wilderness, were added by an unknown writer subsequent to the death of Moses.[1]

The modern critic believes that no part of these law books was written by Moses in their present form; that they contain laws and prescribe customs which grew up gradually among the Hebrew people during a checkered history of nearly ten centuries; that while the oldest portion of the codes of which these books are composed probably embodies substantially his teaching, the latest civil code, as we have it in Deuteronomy, was not formulated until

[1] This is the substantially unanimous opinion of scholars who insist upon the Mosaic authorship of the rest of the book, *e. g.*: "This chapter could not be written by Moses himself, but was added by Joshua or Eleazar, or, as Patrick conjectures, by Samuel, who was a prophet, and wrote by divine authority what he found in the records of Joshua, and his successors, the judges." Matthew Henry, *Commentary on Deut.* xxxiv. 1–14. "It seems most probable, and is commonly believed, that this chapter was not written by Moses, but by Eleazar or Joshua, or Ezra, or some other man of God, directed herein by the Holy Ghost; this being no more impeachment to the Divine authority of this chapter, that the penman is unknown, which also is the lot of some other books of Scripture, than it is to the authority of the acts of the king or parliament, that they are written or printed by some unknown person." Pool's *Annotations*, vol. i. p. 407. The thoughtful reader will probably observe that this argument applies with as much force to the whole Book of Deuteronomy as to a single supplementary chapter of the book.

about the year 620 B. C., and the final ecclesiastical code, as contained in the Levitical or Canon law, and especially in the Book of Leviticus, was not formulated as we now possess it until about the year 525 B. C. These dates, of course, are only approximate; for it is not supposed that the exact year of the completion of any of the codes can now be ascertained. It will thus be seen that the question between the old and the new view of the Bible is more than one of mere dates or authorship. It is not the question, as it has been humorously defined, whether the Pentateuch was written by Moses or by another man named Moses; it is the question whether the books constituting the Pentateuch were given at one time and through one prophet, as the Mohammedans believe was the case with the Koran, or whether they record the growth of a great people under the guidance and inspiration of God. This is not a mere literary question. It is distinctively a theological, and in some sense a religious, question. I hold the second of these two opinions; and in this and the next article I propose to elucidate this opinion more fully.

The parallel between a nation and an individual is a very familiar one, at least as old as Plato. The nation grows as the individual grows. Man has been described as a "bundle of habits." That is not quite an accurate description. He inherits something from his forefathers. Then on that inheritance he begins to build character. Action frequently repeated becomes a habit; habit long

continued becomes a second nature ; and this second nature, the product of habit long continued incorporated in and mixed with what he has inherited, makes the man what he is. He may in this process of growth write down resolutions, as Jonathan Edwards did, and endeavor to live up to them; but the man is not made by the resolutions he writes ; he is made by the life he lives; and the resolutions which he writes are both a product of the preceding life and an impulse and a guidance to the life that lies before him. In a similar manner grows the nation. It starts with certain racial peculiarities. It is an Anglo-Saxon race, or a Latin race, or a Semitic race. This is its inheritance, and on this inheritance it builds its character. In the building of this character, first comes custom ; for what habit is to the individual, custom is to the nation; after this custom has been long repeated, so that it has entered into and formed a part of the national character, it is not infrequently reduced to writing. Sometimes this is done early in its history ; sometimes some prophet arises who sees in advance of his fellows and reduces to writing that which he thinks the nation ought to aim to be. But the nation is not made by its written constitution or its written laws, it is made by its custom; it is not made by what it resolves it will do, nor by what some one says it has done or ought to do ; it is made by what in point of fact it does. For the nation, like the individual, is built up by the processes of life itself.

In this process there may be, and often are, critical periods; there may be, and often are, important writings. The Magna Charta was one such in England; the Constitutions of Clarendon were another. But the nation is not made by these; these help to form its constitution only so far as they are actually embodied in its real life. If it has a written constitution, as we profess to have, still its real character is determined not by the writing, but by the life, and it changes its constitution by its life, whether it incorporates those changes in the written document or not. We as an American people are to-day, not what Hamilton and Madison said we ought to be; we are what we have been, what our national life has made us. Even our written Constitution itself is changed by other processes than those of formal amendment. It has been often said by jurists that Chief Justice Marshall has done as much to make the real Constitution of the United States what it is, though he never wrote a line of it, as did any of its framers.[1] We have recently passed through an epoch in which we have incorporated a very important element in our National Constitution. The question

[1] "The task which Marshall had to perform was the arduous one of construction; fortunately he had to a very striking degree the constructive faculty, a rare gift, and certainly the highest form of intellectual ability which lawyers can ever use and display." *John Marshall*, Allan B. Magruder, p. 165. The very words here used, "constructive" and "construction," indicate the recognized function of a chief justice, which is to construct the constitution by the very process of interpreting it.

arose whether a representative might be excluded by Congress from his seat in Congress because he was a polygamist. He had been unquestionably elected by a majority of the district which he claimed to represent. One party in Congress said: No! the district has an absolute and final right to select whom it will, and if the man thus selected has the three qualifications, age, residence, and citizenship, without which no man can enter Congress, he must be admitted, no matter what his character. The other party replied: Every man in the House of Representatives represents not only his State, but the Nation, and although the initiative comes from the State, the Nation possesses a veto power, and can refuse to allow a man who is living in open violation of the laws of his State and the moral sentiment of the Nation to represent the Nation in its legislative body; and the House of Representatives, by a vote of 286 to 50, decided that Congress, that is, the Nation through Congress, had such a veto power over the action of any particular State. In the future this is the Constitution of the United States. It has been made so by the decision of a body in whom the constitutional power of rendering that decision has been vested. Thus the government, whether it has a written constitution or not, grows by means of decisions more or less formally registered and more or less fully carried out in the national life. The protection of our property and our person depends, not primarily upon the statutes that have

been enacted by the legislatures of the various States, not primarily upon the statutes that have been enacted by the Congress of the United States, but upon what is known as the common law; and the common law is nothing more or less than the customs which have grown up among the Anglo-Saxon people. It is thus evident that the Constitution and laws of the United States, and still more evident that those of Great Britain, are the product of a gradual growth, beginning, let us say, with Alfred the Great and continuing to the present time.

The character of a nation, then, may be described as the result of three coöperating forces: first, a racial characteristic; second, the acceptance by a nation in its birth-period, or one of its successive birth-periods, of a dominant principle — as autocracy by Russia, the supremacy of the State over the Church by England, the authority of the common people by the United States; and, third, the national habit, applying these fundamental principles to changed conditions, perhaps adding new and cognate principles, perhaps modifying those already accepted for better or worse, or departing from them more or less widely. Finally, this national habit is incorporated in writings — in the form either of text-books recognized as authoritative because they reflect the national organic will, or of judicial decisions authoritatively declaring that will, or of codes issued by legislative authority or approved by popular acquiescence and acceptance.

It is, therefore, a great mistake to suppose that the authority of the law dates from the promulgation of the code. The code is generally the last step in the growth of the national law. It is not authoritative because it is promulgated; it promulgates what is already authoritative. In general, the codification of a system of laws marks the end, not the beginning, of its growth.[1] When, therefore, the modern critic says that the Book of Deuteronomy was written B. C. 640, and the Book of Leviticus B. C. 525, he does not mean that the civil laws incorporated in the one and the sacrificial system

[1] The reader will find these principles elucidated and illustrated by Sir Henry Maine in his *Ancient Law*, especially in chaps. i. and ii., from which I quote a few significant and suggestive sentences: "The Homeric word for a custom in the embryo is sometimes 'Themis' (*θέμις*) in the singular — more often 'Dike' (*δίκη*), the meaning of which visibly fluctuates between a 'judgment' and a 'custom' or 'usage.' 'Nomos' (*νόμος*), a Law, so great and famous a term in the political vocabulary of the later Greek society, does not occur in Homer." . . . "It is certain that, in the infancy of mankind, no sort of legislature, not even a distinct author of law, is contemplated or conceived of. Law has scarcely reached the footing of custom; it is rather a habit. It is, to use a French phrase, 'in the air.'" . . . "The Hindoo Code, called the Laws of Menu, which is certainly a Brahmin compilation, undoubtedly enshrines many genuine observances of the Hindoo race, but the opinion of the best contemporary orientalists is, that it does not, as a whole, represent a set of rules ever actually administered in Hindostan. It is, in great part, an ideal picture of that which, in the view of the Brahmins, *ought* to be the law." . . . "When primitive law has once been embodied in a code, there is an end to what may be called its spontaneous development. Henceforward the changes effected in it, if effected at all, are effected deliberately and from without." Pp. 5, 7, 16, 17, 20.

incorporated in the other were then first instituted. He means rather that they were then first completed, and so capable of being reduced to a codified form.

As the modern State is the product of a gradual growth, so is the modern Church. Each denomination is inclined, naturally, to carry back its dogmatic beliefs and its ecclesiastical usages to a remote time, and claim for them a divine origin; to think itself born full grown. But each denomination recognizes that the beliefs and usages of its neighbor have been gradually developed, by a process more or less lengthy and complex, from simple beginnings. Thus, whatever claim the Roman Catholic ecclesiastic may make for the divine origin of his church, the Protestant scholar unhesitatingly traces in ecclesiastical history the successive steps by which that church has grown to its present complex faith, organization, and ritual. He tells us that the celibacy of the clergy, the adoration of the Virgin, and the use of images all date from the fourth century; that Indulgence as a release from the pains and penalties of purgatory was not formally announced until the fourteenth century; that the title "pope" was applied to all bishops in the primitive church, and that the supremacy of the bishop of Rome was not claimed until the fourth century, his infallibility was not asserted until about the eleventh, and was not authoritatively affirmed until the nineteenth. The canons of that church are equally the product of

growth. The Decretum of Gratianus in the twelfth century was a codification partly of previous codes, partly of incongruous customs and inconsistent decrees, and has become in turn the basis of subsequent additions and modifications.[1] Nor is it less certain that both the creeds and the ecclesiastical usages of Protestant churches have in a similar manner grown up gradually. The creed has generally been forged as a weapon supposed to be necessary for the defense of the preëxisting faith;[2] the canon has been tempered and fashioned into obligatory law out of what was at first only a convenient custom — and this whether it involves the authority of the bishop in Episcopacy or the

[1] For a good brief history of the canon law of the Roman Catholic Church, which may serve as an illustration of the probable process which preceded the final codification of the canon law of the Hebrew church in the Levitical code, see article Canon Law, in the *Encyclopædia Britannica.*

[2] Calvin's *Institutes* are a striking illustration of this truth, as may be seen from the following quotations: "We conclude, then, that it is not now left to faithful ministers to frame any new doctrine, but that it behoves them simply to adhere to the doctrine to which God has made all subject, without any exception." *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, John Calvin, trans. by John Allen, 6th Am. ed., vol. ii., bk. 4, chap. viii. § ix. "Upon this principle, those ancient councils, such as the Council of Nice, of Constantinople, the first of Ephesus, that of Chalcedon, and others like them, which were held for the condemnation of errors, we cheerfully receive and reverence as sacred, as far as respects the articles of faith which they have defended; for they contain nothing but the pure and natural interpretation of the Scripture, which the holy fathers, with spiritual prudence, applied to the discomfiture of the enemies of religion who arose in those days." *Ibid.*, bk. 4, chap. ix. § viii.

independence of the local church in Congregationalism.

The modern or evolutionary student of the Bible believes that both the civil and the ecclesiastical laws of the Hebrew people were developed in a similar manner. As we now possess them in the Books of Exodus, Numbers, Leviticus, and Deuteronomy, they are the product of ten centuries of national growth. Into their composition have entered four elements: (1) the character of the Hebrews as a peculiarly religious people, that is, one preëminent for their possession of a moral consciousness of God; (2) the prophetic genius of the great founder of their nation, the prophet statesman Moses; (3) the successive additions to the principles enunciated by him made by subsequent prophets possessed of a similar spirit, and successive applications of those principles, and in some cases departures from them, by the people into whose life they had entered; (4) and, finally, their codification in a substantially final form in the two great codes, — one the civil or Deuteronomic code, the other the ecclesiastical or Levitical code. To trace the origin and growth of these codes or systems of laws, and to interpret their fundamental principles, will be the object of this and the next article in this series.

The founder of the Hebrew nation, and in some sense of its distinctive theology and its type of religion, was Moses. Who, then, was Moses? A shadowy figure, so far in the remote past that in studying the details of his life it is impossible

scientifically to separate the legendary from the historical. Yet it must not be forgotten in such a case that legends themselves indicate not less truly than do assured historical facts the essential elements in the character of him around whom they have grown up.[1] The story of his life, as we gather it from Biblical and extra-Biblical sources, is briefly as follows.[2] Israel was an unorganized body of

[1] See, ante, chap. iii. pp. 74 ff. Substantially all critics recognize in Moses one of the greatest and most creative spirits of ancient history. Thus Renan, who speaks of him as "completely buried by the legends which have grown up over him," still recognizes him as "a colossus among the great mythical figures of humanity." *History of the People of Israel*, vol. i. p. 135. Dr. H. Oort regards him as the founder of the Hebrew Nation, and so of that spiritual movement which culminated in Christianity. "It is due to Moses in the first instance that the uncivilized hordes that wandered through the Arabian deserts in the thirteenth century before Christ, and afterwards conquered Canaan, finally produced such noble results." . . . "In many respects his character was moulded by that of his age, but the direction which he gave to the powers of Israel opens a new era. Moses, the founder of the moral Yahweh-worship, stands at the head of the spiritual movement which culminated in him who said: Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God!" *Bible for Learners*, vol. i. pp. 313, 325. Ewald recognizes the historical trustworthiness of the narrative in Exodus in its main incidents. "That Moses was brought up in Egyptian learning and knowledge, but yet, when driven to an act of patriotic indignation, obliged to flee to the peninsula of Sinai, and to take refuge with Midian (or, according to Hellenistic pronunciation, Madian), the ruling nation there, and that he formed a friendship with a prince of that people, Hobab (or Jethro), and married his daughter, is also in its present form reported only by the Third Narrator. But the narrative is without doubt based on genuine history." *The History of Israel*, by Heinrich Ewald, vol. ii. pp. 42, 43.

[2] The original authorities for a study of the life of Moses are

slaves under a remorseless despotism. The inhuman ill usage which still characterizes the despotism of Egypt remains a mournful illustration of the simple statement of the Hebrew historian, "Therefore they did set over them taskmasters to afflict them with their burdens." The echo of their cry by reason of their taskmasters is still to be heard in the melancholy antiphonal wail sung in a weird chorus by the bands of workmen and workwomen on the banks of the Nile: "They starve us, they starve us; they beat us, they beat us: but there 's some one above, there 's some one above, who will punish them well, who will punish them well."[1] Nevertheless, despite ill usage, the Israelites multiplied rapidly. It seems to be the tendency of slavery to increase the number of the enslaved and to reduce the number of masters. To prevent the possibility of an insurrection, an edict was issued to slay all the male children. One Hebrew mother, with an audacious ingenuity which could find lodgment only in a mother's heart, resolved to save her baby boy from the tiger by putting him into the tiger's den. She put the

the Pentateuch, chiefly the Book of Exodus, and Josephus's *Antiquities of the Jews*, books ii., iii., and iv. S. Baring-Gould, *Legends of the Patriarchs and Prophets*, chap. xxxii., has brought together various legends from other sources concerning Moses. The Koran should also be consulted for Mohammedan legends (see *Selections from the Kur-án*, by Edward W. Lane, pp. 97–131, Moses and his People). Also compare Stephen's speech (Acts chap. vii.) with the Exodus narrative.

[1] *Lectures on the History of the Jewish Church*, Arthur Penrhyn Stanley, D. D., Part I., p. 93.

child in a basket made of the papyrus which grows in great quantities by the banks of the Nile. Perhaps she shared the Egyptian fancy that this papyrus was a protection against the river demon embodied in the crocodile. She then left him at the water's edge, where the princess came to bathe, and set her daughter to watch what should become of the little waif. She could neither bear to witness his death nor endure the suspense of absolute ignorance of his fate. Her scheme succeeded; the cry of the babe appealed to the woman's heart of the princess; she called to a Hebrew maid who seemed to be accidentally standing not far away; and the sister took the babe back to his own mother to be nursed until he should be old enough to be weaned. Then he was transferred to the palace to be educated by Egyptian priests as the adopted son of his foster-mother. The Child of the Waters became an Egyptian prince. Jewish legends report him as so extraordinarily beautiful that laborers stopped from their toil to refresh themselves with a glance at his bright face; and as possessed of a mind as remarkable as his body. Egypt was the land of civilization, of art, of science, and of philosophy; and the young prince, who, by virtue of his adoption into the royal family, was also a priest, became versed in the arts, the sciences, and the theology of the Egyptian cultivated class. The ancient legends respecting him declare that he not only acquainted himself with the civilization of his age, but added to it. He is said to have learned

arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, medicine, and music; to have invented boats and engines for building; instruments of war and of hydraulics, hieroglyphics, and division of lands — that is, surveying. His military achievements outshone in popular estimation his intellectual attainments. He conducted with great success a campaign against the Ethiopians, and returned in triumph, probably the most popular man in the kingdom despite his plebeian origin; but also probably the most envied. But he never forgot that he was a Hebrew; perhaps with the Hebrew blood he retained something of that contempt for other races which has been at once the strength and the weakness of the Hebrew race. Nor did he forget the Hebrew religion. It is said that he worshiped outside the temple walls an unknown God; perhaps he identified the God of his Hebrew mother with the incommunicable deity whom the esoteric theology of the Egyptian priesthood taught him to believe was back of and manifested through the cloud of mediatorial deities whom the common people ignorantly worshiped. Says Rawlinson in his "History of Egypt:" —

"The primary doctrine of the esoteric religion undoubtedly was the real essential Unity of the Divine Nature. The sacred texts taught that there was a single Being, the 'sole producer of all things, both in heaven and earth, Himself not produced of any,' . . . 'the only true living God, self-originated,' . . . 'who exists from the beginning,' . . . 'who has made all things, but has

not Himself been made.' This Being seems never to have been represented by any material, even symbolical, form. It is thought that He had no name, or, if He had, that it must have been unlawful either to pronounce or write it. He was a pure spirit, perfect in every respect — all-wise, almighty, supremely good. The gods of the popular mythology were understood, in the esoteric religion, to be either personified attributes of the Deity, or parts of the nature which He had created, considered as improved and inspired by Him." [1]

It is not improbable that this doctrine, which the Egyptian priests held as an abstraction, Moses infused with a life of real devotion, borrowed from his mother, and so made it concrete and vital. Strabo cannot be said to be a historical authority respecting Moses, except as he indicates correctly the popular impression of a later epoch; but these impressions are not incredible; their reality would go far to account for subsequent events in the career and influence of this extraordinary man; and according to Strabo, "He [Moses] taught that the Egyptian was not right in likening the nature of God to beasts and cattle, nor yet the Africans, nor even the Greeks in fashioning their gods in the form of man. He taught that this only was God — that which encompasses all of us, earth and sea; that which we call Heaven, and the

[1] *History of Ancient Egypt*, by George Rawlinson, M. A., vol. i. p. 324. The whole chapter (No. 10), on the Religion of Ancient Egypt, is worth consultation by the student of the life and work of Moses.

Order of the world, and the Nature of things." This was quite in accord with the esoteric doctrine of the Egyptian priesthood. But no one so angers a priesthood as he who reveals the mysteries of their faith to the common herd; no one seems to them more dangerous than he who at once spiritualizes and popularizes truth which they have regarded purely as a philosophy and therefore as their peculiar possession. Such a one uses their own professed beliefs with which to destroy their professional power. He is condemned as a renegade from their order, a betrayer of their secrets, and an enemy of their religion. More than once Moses narrowly escaped assassination. Nothing but the intervention of Thermutis, his foster-mother, prevented him from falling a prey to the anger of the king, who, if modern scholars are right in identifying him with Rameses II., was not a monarch to brook independence in another or to control the passion of envy in himself.

Such is the story of Moses's life as we gather it from the uncertain traditions of the past. Such, in shadowy and uncertain outline, was the training of the man whose passionate burst of indignation against an incident of Egyptian oppression compelled him to flee the court and the kingdom; whose years of exile in the wilderness trained in him the needed spirit of patience, gave him opportunity for reflection on the truths which he had learned as a philosophy and by devout meditation was to convert into religion, and familiarized him with the

wilderness into which he was to lead the people whom he was to convert into a nation by giving to them the fundamental principles of their civil and their religious life. How he led them out of their bondage into that wilderness it is not necessary here to relate. The story is familiar to every reader of the Bible: it is enough to intimate very briefly the cumulative reasons which led me to accept that story of the Exodus as in its essential character trustworthy history.

In the first place, this story of the Exodus is written into the songs and stories of the Hebrew people; it is interwoven throughout their literature.[1] In this respect it is in striking contrast with the story of the Fall, which, after it is once recorded in the third chapter of Genesis, is never again referred to by any of the Old Testament writers, and among the writers of the New Testament only by Paul, and by him only incidentally.

But it is not only in their literature that this exodus of Israel from Egypt was celebrated; it was celebrated by their greatest national festival, the Passover. And this Passover was of such a character as to indicate a true memory of certain details of that great event; and it was so widely and continuously observed as to make incredible the opinion that it celebrated nothing.[2] As the

[1] For references to Moses see 1 Chron. xxi. 29; xxii. 13; xxiii. 14, 15; 2 Chron. xxiv. 6, 9; xxxiv. 14; Ps. ciii. 7; cv. 26; cvi.; Is. lxiii. 11, 12. For reference to the Exodus and the wanderings in the wilderness, see Pss. cv., cvi., cxxxv., cxxxvi.; Neh. ix. 9–23.

[2] Comp. Exod. ch. xii.; Num. ix. 5; Josh. v. 10, 11; 2 Kings

existence of the American Fourth of July is itself an indication of a definite day when the independence of the nation was declared, so the Passover is an indication not to be ignored that the birth of the nation was characterized by some such event as its history narrates and its poets celebrate.

There are also silent witnesses outside either the national literature or the national life to the substantial truth of the story of the Exodus. The Egyptian monuments contain many pictorial representations which serve to illustrate the Old Testament account of the Exodus. They are not demonstrations of its accuracy, but they are at least indications that it is not inaccurate. It is not within the province of this article to attempt to reproduce in any detail the arguments from the monuments; it must suffice to say that I believe there never has been found in Egypt any figure, symbol, picture, or monument which tends to throw doubt upon the narrative in the Book of Exodus, or to indicate that the story, even in its minutest details, is inaccurate, while there are many indications of the accuracy of the incidental allusions to Egyptian sites or Egyptian customs which the narrative contains.[1]

xxiii. 21–23; 2 Chron. xxx. 1; xxxv. 1–19; Ezra vi. 19, 20; Matt. xxvi. 17, 19. A comparison of these references will show that the feast of the Passover was kept apparently continuously from its first appointment down to Christ. That there should be such a continuous celebration, if there was no event to celebrate, is hardly credible.

[1] Any illustrative work on Egypt, such as *The History of*

The confirmation lent to that narrative by geographical exploration is not less noteworthy. Geographical explorers have followed the line of the great pilgrimage; they have been able to see where the nation could have crossed an arm of the Red Sea in the manner described in the Biblical narrative; where a passage might easily have been made for the people by an ebb tide and a strong

Ancient Egypt, by Dr. Rawlinson, or *The Ancient Egyptians*, by Sir J. Gardner Wilkinson, D. C. L., F. R. S., etc., contains illustrations of Egyptian civilization which serve to throw light on incidental references in the Biblical history. For a general study of such elucidations, and the confirmation given to Bible history by the ancient monuments, see *Recent Research in Bible Lands*, Herman V. Hilprecht, Ph. D., D. D.; *The Bible and Modern Discoveries*, by Henry A. Harper of the Palestine Exploration Fund; and *History, Prophecy, and the Monuments*, by J. F. McCurdy, Ph. D., LL. D., Professor of Oriental Languages in the University College, Toronto. A single paragraph from Mr. Harper's book may serve to indicate the nature, though not the extent, of the confirmation lent to the Hebrew history of the Exodus by modern investigations in Egypt. "Before we leave these springs let us sum up what the recent Biblical gains have been. The true starting-point of the Exodus, with the city of Pithom, has been found. Then, also, that the Hebrew words translated in the Authorized Version do not mean 'Red Sea' but 'Sea of Reeds.' Also we have found that 'the tongue of the Egyptian Sea' at the time of the Exodus extended to the present Lake Timsah; that owing to the elevation of the ground that 'sea' 'dried up,' and left lakes of brackish water, through which the present Suez Canal runs; that the Israelites crossed 'the Sea of Reeds' somewhere near Lake Timsah, and then went 'three days' journey in the wilderness of Etham, and pitched in Marah' (Num. xxxiii. 8). They had come to Marah, and find the 'waters of Marah' bitter. We have seen that these 'Mûsa' springs are 'bitter,' that they have a deposit of bog iron ore in some, and others are 'brackish.'" P. 89.

wind; and where quicksands exist which interpret the disaster which overwhelmed the pursuing Egyptians. In a similar manner, almost every step of the journey from Egypt to Mount Sinai has been identified; and a great plain which would well serve for the encampment of Israel at the foot of Mount Sinai is there to indicate at least the probability of such an encampment.[1] It is true that a historical novelist can describe with geographical accuracy any scene through which his hero is supposed to pass; but, in fact, the novelist is rarely accurate, and imaginative history, lacking the deliberate purpose of the professional romancer, generally lacks even the *vrai-semblance* which the romancer is able to impart to his narratives. Similar considerations to those which Professor Schliemann's explorations have furnished in support of a historical basis for the Iliad constitute a much stronger argument for the substantial historicity of the story of the Exodus and the encampment in the wilderness.

It may, then, be assumed that Moses was one of the people of Israel; that in his education he

[1] For illustration of this geographical confirmation of the Hebrew history of the Exodus and the march to Sinai and thence to the Promised Land, see *The Desert of the Exodus*, by E. H. Palmer, M. A., especially chap. xxv. He thus (at p. 434) sums up his conclusions: "We cannot, perhaps, ever hope to identify all the stations and localities mentioned in the Bible account of the Exodus, but enough has been recovered to enable us to trace the more important lines of march, and to follow the Israelites in their several journeys from Egypt to Sinai, from Sinai to Kadesh, and from thence to the Promised Land."

received all that the most civilized state of his time could give him; that, by birth, by education, and by nature, he had the qualities of a prophet and a statesman; and that, being so equipped, he led the people of Israel out of Egypt to the great plain at the foot of Mount Sinai, where he gave them their constitution. That constitution is contained in what is admitted by all critics — the conservative and progressive, traditional and modern — to be the oldest complete book in the Bible.[1] It consists of the twentieth, twenty-first, twenty-second, twenty-third chapters of Exodus, and, I think, of the first eight verses also of the twenty-fourth. It is probable also that, if the nineteenth chapter is not a part of the Book of the Covenant, it embodies essential principles which belong to the same age.[2]

[1] Not the oldest writing, — the Song of Deborah, for example, is probably older, — but the oldest book in the Bible. It is known as the Book of the Covenant.

[2] It is true that some critics attribute the book, not only in its present form but in its essential contents, to an age much later than that of Moses. Wellhausen argues against the Mosaic authorship of the Decalogue. *History of Israel*, Julius Wellhausen, p. 439. Dr. Budde thus states the argument from the evolutionist's point of view: "Many scholars, while relinquishing everything else, have tried to save the Ten Commandments, the 'Mosaic' moral law, for these oldest times. Now the Ten Commandments base all their demands on the nature of the God of Israel. If, then, they really did come from this period, it appears that there existed, even in the earliest times, a conception of God so sublime that hardly anything could have remained for the prophets to do. This of itself should suffice to show the impossibility of the Mosaic origin of the Ten Commandments." *Religion of Israel to the Exile*, Karl Budde, D. D., p. 32. This argument ignores the existence of geniuses in human history who anticipate

At this point let the reader lay down this volume and read through this Book of the Covenant; it

their fellows and proclaim truths to which the race only gradually arrives. Prof. William James has well said that "the evolutionary view of history, when it denies the vital importance of individual initiative, is, then, an utterly vague and unscientific conception, a lapse from modern scientific determinism into the most ancient oriental fatalism." *The Will to Believe*, p. 245. That Moses was a spiritual genius, with such power of individual initiative, all Hebrew history combines to testify, and most scholars concur in believing its testimony. So even Wellhausen: "The time of Moses is invariably regarded as the properly creative period in Israel's history. . . . The prophets who came after gave, it is true, greater distinctness to the peculiar character of the Nation; but they did not make it, on the contrary, it made them." *History of Israel*, Julius Wellhausen, p. 432. This does not seem to me to consist with his apparent theory that the Ten Commandments have a late prophetic origin; because the Ten Commandments are unmistakably the real moral making of the Nation, if not as a formal code certainly as a system of moral principles. A correspondent writing to me objects to the statement that the Book of the Covenant is the oldest book in the Bible. How can it be, he asks, "as old even as Deuteronomy, when the latter (chapter v.) knows no more powerful sanction for the observance of the Sabbath than the memory of the unresting slavery in Egypt? Surely, if, with the writer of the Book of the Covenant, the Deuteronomist had known any story of creation-rest, he could not have failed to adduce that far more tremendous sanction." This argument assumes that the Ten Commandments existed originally in the form in which they are contained in the Book of the Covenant. As stated in the text, I believe that the explanatory matter was added in both editions of the Ten Commandments (Exod. xx. 1-17; Deut. v. 6-21) at a later date; it is only the essential principles in the form given below which were probably Mosaic. The Mosaic authorship of the Book of the Covenant, not in its literary form but in its essential principles, and especially of the Ten Commandments, is maintained and emphasized by Ewald: "There is no well-founded doubt that the Ten Commandments are derived from Moses, in their

will not take him long. Let him then endeavor to imagine the mental and moral condition of the people to whom its instructions were imparted. They had just emerged from a slavery which had stifled any independent moral or intellectual development; in which they had been subject to a people whom Herodotus describes as "religious to excess, far beyond any other race of men"; [1] a people who made an elaborate sacrificial system a means

general import, their present order, and even in their peculiar language. They are genuinely Mosaic in essence, and comprise the highest truths which the new religion brought into the world, in so far as they may be summed up in a few short sentences for everybody, and are expressed with so much precision and order as of itself to indicate a superior mind. Their arrangement possesses the most antique simplicity imaginable, and has itself become the model of many similar series of laws, in groups of five and ten. They are moreover twice (Exod. xx. and Deut. v.) placed at the head of all expositions of the Mosaic religion; and in both cases distinctly marked as most sacred and peculiar words. And whereas there are several peculiar expressions, even in the ten very brief sentences of which they undoubtedly originally consisted, both the copies now extant insert several additions and explanations — an infallible criterion of a very ancient text variously interpreted in after-times — a text in this respect without a parallel in the Old Testament." *History of Israel*, Heinrich Ewald, vol. ii. p. 19. This view of the date of the Ten Commandments is entertained by the majority of the modern scholars of the evangelical liberal school: by W. Robertson Smith, *The Old Testament in the Jewish Church*, pp. 335–338; by Charles A. Briggs, *The Study of Holy Scripture*, p. 118; by A. B. Bruce, *Apologetics*, chap. iv. pp. 208–215; by Arthur Penrhyn Stanley, *Lectures on the History of the Jewish Church*, lect. vii. pp. 194–198; and apparently by S. R. Driver, *Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament*, pp. 31–35.

[1] Herodotus, quoted in Rawlinson's *History of Egypt*, i. 320.

at once of glorifying the gods and of supporting and enriching the priests; a people who knew nothing of the esoteric doctrine of monotheism, the knowledge of which was sedulously guarded from the uninitiated; who worshiped innumerable incarnations and manifestations of the deity, from the sun to the sacred beetle; whose fear of future hell and hopes of future heaven gave to the priesthood a power which they were not slow to use; whose moral life indicates that the ethical precepts of their sacred books were not much better known than the spiritual monotheism of their specially illuminated philosophers; and who were dominated by a priesthood which controlled literature, education, science, and politics in the interest of their own ecclesiastical order, and were the master spirits in every event of life, public and private.[1]

The simplicity of the religious and ethical ideas contained in the Book of the Covenant is the more striking when contrasted with the ideals and practices of the country in which Israel had so long dwelt. The book is as remarkable for what it omits as for what it contains. It is practically silent respecting any future life, any sacrificial system, any ecclesiastical ritual, any organized priesthood, any form of what was then universally and is even now generally termed religious duty. It is purely spiritual in its conception of God and of his worship, and wholly non-ritualistic and almost

[1] See Rawlinson's *History of Egypt*, i. chap. x.; compare chap. iii.

exclusively ethical in its interpretation of the divine will. Its fundamental principles are incorporated in ten commandments, which in their original form probably read substantially as follows: [1] —

I am Jehovah thy God which brought thee out of the land of Egypt, the house of servants.

Thou shalt have no other gods.

Thou shalt not make any graven image.

Thou shalt not take the name of Jehovah thy God in vain.

Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.[2]

Honor thy father and thy mother.

Thou shalt not kill.

Thou shalt not steal.

Thou shalt not commit adultery.

Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.

Thou shalt not covet.

The rest of the Book of the Covenant is little more than an illustration and an application of these principles to specific conditions in society, or a modification or amelioration of some of those conditions, such as slavery, in accordance with the spirit of these principles. Some of these applications clearly belong to a later date, since they would

[1] This is the view of most modern scholars, such as Ewald, Driver, Briggs, Stanley, Bruce, and others. For the grounds on which this opinion is based the reader is referred to these authors as cited in the preceding notes.

[2] That is, set apart. The subsequent additions undoubtedly truly interpret its purpose — to secure rest to a people who as slaves had lived in perpetual servile drudgery.

be wholly inapplicable to the migratory condition of Israel while dwelling in tents in the wilderness.[1] But the fundamental principles of this Hebraic constitution are as radical as they are simple, and are equally applicable to all epochs and all peoples. Leaving their theological and ecclesiastical aspects to be considered in the following article, I propose in this article to state the political aspects of these principles, and to show how the political life of the nation was grounded in and developed out of them.

The fundamental principle of this constitution is that religion is the basis of the state and the ground of authority for law; that, in other words, all just law is divine in its origin, nature, and sanctions.

There are two contrasted conceptions respecting the basis of the state and the ground of authority for law which have claimed the suffrages of mankind. The first is the doctrine that authority rests upon power. Law, according to this opinion, is a command or series of commands, given by one man or body of men, to another man or body of men. It is law because the person or persons issuing it have power to punish the person or persons to whom it is issued, for disobedience. Of this conception of law John Austin may be regarded as the chief historical exponent. "A command," he says, "is an order issued by a superior to an inferior. It is a signification of desire distinguished

[1] *E. g.*, chap. xxii., 5, 6, 7. There were no vineyards, no standing corn, and no houses in the wilderness.

by this peculiarity, — that the party to whom it is directed is liable to evil from the other, in case he comply not with the desire. . . . The evil is called a *sanction*, and the command, or duty, is said to be *sanctioned* by the chance of incurring the evil. . . . All commands, however, are not laws. That term is reserved for those commands which oblige generally to the performance of acts of a class." These principles lead to and are incorporated in the following definitions: "(1) Laws, being commands, emanate from a determinate source; (2) Every sanction is an evil annexed to a command; (3) Every duty implies a command, and chiefly means obnoxiousness to the evils annexed to commands."[1] This is in effect a philosophical statement of the doctrine popularly embodied in the maxim, "Might makes right." The right of the superior to command depends upon his power to enforce his commands. Notwithstanding the high authority for it, it is none other than the philosophy which underlies all despotism.

In striking contrast to this is the philosophy implied in the parenthetic statement in the Declaration of Independence that "government rests upon the consent of the governed." Of the philosophy embodied in this maxim Rousseau is the ablest modern exponent. He taught that man was originally in a state of nature, which was a state of absolute freedom; that in this freedom men were

[1] *Encyclopædia Britannica*, article Law. See also Maine on *Ancient Law*, pp. 6, 7.

brought into continual conflict of interests and consequent disadvantages; that they, therefore, consented to surrender some of this freedom for the advantages which an orderly government would bring with it, and that this imaginary agreement, or "social contract," was the basis of all just government.[1]

If the first theory is that which underlies despotism, the second is that which underlies anarchy.[2] Upon the theory of the "social contract" there is really no such thing as authority. Law is simply a form of consent, or at least derives all its author-

[1] For a good critical account of Rousseau's doctrine of the Social Contract, see *Rousseau*, by John Morley, vol. ii. chap. iii. See also, for a briefer description of it by more hostile critics, *A Century of Revolution*, by William S. Lilly, chap. i., and *Popular Government*, by Sir Henry S. Maine, pp. 154–162.

[2] And anarchy is only another form of despotism; the despotism of the many in lieu of that of the one or of the few. See this abundantly illustrated in Taine's *French Revolution*, book i. To this effect De Tocqueville bears eloquent testimony: "If the absolute power of a majority were to be substituted, by democratic nations, for all the different powers which checked or retarded overmuch the energy of individual minds, the evil would only have changed character. Men would not have found the means of independent life; they would simply have discovered (no easy task) a new physiognomy of servitude. There is, — and I cannot repeat it too often, — there is here matter for profound reflection to those who look on freedom of thought as a holy thing, and who hate not only the despot, but despotism. For myself, when I feel the hand of power lie heavy on my brow, I care but little to know who oppresses me; and I am not the more disposed to pass beneath the yoke because it is held out to me by the arms of a million of men." *Democracy in America*, Alexis De Tocqueville, pp. 12, 13.

ity from a consent, real or implied. The maxim that "government rests on the consent of the governed" still continues popular; but the philosophy of which it is an expression has long since been abandoned by all historical and philosophical students. There never was such a state of nature as Rousseau imagines; there never was such a social contract as he has conceived. The earlier stages of life are not those of liberty, but those of absolutism. As Rousseau's theory has no basis in history, so it has none in analogy. The government of the father does not depend on the consent of the children, nor that of the teacher on the consent of the pupil, nor that of God on the consent of men. No more does the government of the state depend on the consent of the citizens. For America the notion that government rests on the consent of the governed was forever demolished by the Civil War.

The basic principle of the Hebrew government was neither the authority of one man over other men because he has power to enforce his commands, nor the consent of other men to accept the will of one man — that is, the consent of the governed; it was the authority of Almighty God. There are certain great natural laws — of heat, of light, of electricity, of gravitation. Men neither make them nor unmake them, mend them nor modify them. They must obey them, and then they can use them; but they violate them at their peril. So there are laws of health which men neither

make nor unmake, mend nor modify. If we obey them, we have health; if we disobey them, we sicken and die. The fundamental principle of the Hebraic commonwealth was that there are great moral laws by which human society is bound together. These laws men neither make nor unmake, mend nor modify. They are not dependent upon the will of monarch, oligarchy, aristocracy, or public assembly. They are eternal, absolute, immutable. We must find out what they are and obey them, or suffer the penalty of our ignorance or our willfulness. "The seat of law," says Hooker, "is in the bosom of Almighty God." This is the doctrine of the Hebraic commonwealth. Neither Czar nor Council of Ten nor British Parliament nor American Congress can make law. All that man can do, whatever governmental mechanism he adopts, is to ascertain what are the laws of social order, and apply them to the problems of his own time and his own community. This is the first and fundamental principle of the Hebraic commonwealth; the authority for law is neither the power of one man to enforce his will over other men nor the consent of the governed; it is the authority of the one and only Lawgiver. If by our governmental organization we ascertain what the law of the social order is, we shall do well; if we fail to ascertain, or, ascertaining, fail to obey, we shall do ill.

The second principle or congeries of principles in the Hebraic constitution is found in its state-

ment of the essential laws of the social order. These are very simple and very vital. They were stated in the Ten Commandments in concrete forms, but they are concrete forms of great principles which may be restated somewhat thus: Spiritual reverence for God; preservation of some time free from the drudgery of toil for the development of the higher nature; respect for parents; regard for the rights of person, of the family, of property, of reputation; and, last, this respect real and spontaneous, not formal and enforced.

When a community bases government on either the power of the governor, leading to despotism, or on the consent of the governed, leading to anarchy, it violates the first of these laws. When it substitutes symbols for realities, promotes and encourages the spirit of irreverence, devotes all its energies to material advancement, forgetting all need of and all ministry to the higher life, and makes every day a workday, and wealth the measure of prosperity, it violates the second, third, and fourth laws. When, through the disregard of parents, it suffers the disintegration of the family, which is itself the unit of organized society, and so prepares the way for widespread social disorder, it violates the fifth law. When it fails to afford protection of the innocent from the oppressions of the strong or the violence of mobs, or suffers such industrial conditions as destroy men and women and children before their time in mining and manufacturing industries, it violates the sixth law.

When it permits the practice of polygamy, or encourages licentiousness in legalized forms by freedom of divorce, it violates the seventh law. When it taxes a helpless and prostrate people under forms of law, giving them by law none of the benefits for which governments are organized, it violates the eighth law. When it allows honored citizens whose life has been devoted to the public service of the community to be slandered by a sensational and unprincipled press, and continues to give the press its support, it violates the ninth law. When it depends wholly or chiefly on force to maintain these laws, failing to furnish such education as will make obedience to them voluntary and spontaneous, it violates the tenth law. These are the fundamental laws of human life. Their maintenance is essential to social order. No so-called laws are just which do not work in harmony with them.

These ethical and spiritual laws, as simple as they are fundamental, are easily apprehended by mankind. Their sanction is in the universal conscience. This is the third principle of the Mosaic constitution. The force of these laws does not lie primarily in the power of the human governor to enforce it; nor does it lie in the consent of the governed; it lies in the inherent authority of divine law and in the sanction given to that law by human conscience. This principle is recognized in the history of the giving of the Ten Commandments. Moses, it is said, came down from Mount

Sinai, submitted to the people the question whether they would accept Jehovah as their king and his will as their law, and "all the people answered together and said, All that Jehovah hath spoken we will do." This acceptance by the people of the divine constitution gives to the Book of the Covenant, which contains the Ten Commandments, its name; gives, indeed, to the collection of books in which that Book of the Covenant is found the ancient title, the "Old Testament," or "Old Covenant." Throughout their history the relation between God and Israel was treated as a covenant relation. The prophetic indictments of Israel were not merely because they had violated the divine law, but because they had broken their covenant with their God. The law was not imposed upon them; it was accepted by them; its authority was divine, and they had recognized their obligations to obey it. This fact is written large in Hebrew history. There are no threats of punishment in a future life; there are no promises of rewards in a future life; no priesthood is vested with power to enforce the law by appeals to superstitious fears, as the law was enforced in the Middle Ages. Nor was there permitted to Israel in its governmental ideals a standing army to enforce against a recalcitrant people the laws which they had made their own by their acceptance of them. "Out of Zion shall come forth the law," said one of Israel's great prophets. That is, the obligation of law was a religious obligation recognized

by the conscience of the people to whom it was given.

These three principles, then, were at the foundation of the Hebraic commonwealth: first, that reverence for God and acceptance of his authority is the basis of a free state; second, that the general laws of the social order are very simple, though their applications may be diverse and complicated; third, that for a peaceful and a free people acceptance of these laws is necessary, and in a free commonwealth they must depend primarily for their support on the conscience of the people themselves. On these principles as a foundation was built the Hebraic commonwealth; history has proved them to be the foundation of all truly free governments. How they were applied in the Hebrew commonwealth will be the subject for consideration in the next chapter.

CHAPTER V

THE DEUTERONOMIC CODE

It is clear from the subsequent history of the Hebrews that only the foundations of the national structure were laid during the lifetime of Moses. The superstructure was not instantly reared thereon, but was the product of centuries of national growth. It does not come within the province of this volume to trace in detail the national history of Israel. The general outlines of that history are familiar to every reader of the English Bible. For three centuries the tribes existed in scattered and separate communities, without a constitution, an organized government, or effective law. Leaders arose from time to time called "judges," though their function was executive rather than judicial, and military rather than executive. These leaders were not elected by the people, nor did they inherit their office. They assumed authority by reason of some force or vigor of character which made them efficient in protecting the people against foreign foes, or made them the subjects of popular admiration by reason of special feats of valor.[1] Much of the

[1] "Their authority was divine, or, as we should say, moral, in its character; it rested upon that spontaneous recognition of the idea

time the tribes were subject to predatory raids by surrounding nations; part of the time they were in absolute subjection to cruel and unscrupulous foes. Within the tribes themselves there was practically no law. "Every man did what was right in his own eyes." At length, under one of these leaders — Saul — the tribes were united in a vigorous and successful campaign; under his successor, David, they were organized into a united kingdom; and this kingdom, under his son Solomon, grew in size, in wealth, and in apparent prosperity. But the spirit of liberty in a people whose blood and whose essential principles united to make them jealous of their freedom, the spirit of restlessness which was inherited from their colonial days, and the grievous exactions levied upon them by a king who lived in almost Oriental splendor, induced rebellion after his death. In the reign of his successor ten of the twelve tribes seceded; the nation was rent in twain; a new capital was established; an idolatrous worship imitating that of Egypt was set up in Samaria for the seceding tribes; and the history of the Jews flows thereafter in a divided stream as that of Israel and Judah. After two hundred years of increasing profligacy, Israel, or more accurately a large proportion of its population, was carried away captive by the Assyrians, and their country was repopulated by a colony from the land of their captors. A mongrel population

of right which, though unexpressed, was alive and working among the tribes." *The History of Israel*, by Julius Wellhausen, p. 436.

supplanted the tribes of Hebrew origin, a hybrid religion the worship of Jehovah.[1] The two remaining tribes, retaining the capital and the temple, preserved their nationality under the name of Judah, but, changing their religion with the changing opinions of their rulers, outrivaled their sister Israel in corruption.[2] This corruption reached its climax under Manasseh, the fourteenth king of the southern kingdom. His reign of over half a century was characterized not only by the establishment of paganism as the religion of the state, but by a consequent reign of licentiousness and immorality impossible to describe and almost impossible to imagine. The worship of the heavenly bodies was restored; the name of Moloch became a common oath; human sacrifice was reinstated; there was a succession of small furnaces in the streets for which the children gathered wood and in which their parents baked cakes as offerings to Astarte; the roofs of the houses were converted into places of worship and of incense-burning to the heathen gods; the temple vessels were consecrated to Baal; the altar in front of the temple was desecrated; and the ark itself was removed from the Holy of Holies. An attempt made by faithful prophets to stem this current of heathenism was met by a wholesale religious persecution of all the followers of Jehovah, and by a reign of terror against all who dared remain faithful to the religion of their

[1] 2 Kings xvii.
[2] Jer. iii. 11.

fathers.[1] During this half-century the religious writings as well as the religious principles of the Jewish nation were forgotten. Such ecclesiastical literature as had grown up during the preceding centuries was kept within the priestly circles. The people knew even less about ecclesiasticism then than they do to-day.

Then it was that an unknown prophet arose, resolved to do what he could to bring Israel back to the simple religion of Moses. Inspired by the teaching of preceding prophets of his own nation, such as Isaiah and Micah, and perhaps also by echoes of the prophecies from the northern kingdom of such men as Elijah, Amos, and Hosea, the unknown gathered together whatever there was of ancient law in manuscript and of ancient counsel in current traditions, and rewrote the laws of Moses, codifying both manuscript and tradition, modifying both and adding to them new regulations in the spirit of the old, and new applications of the old to the conditions and problems of his own time. The discovery of his writing would have insured the death of the author and the destruction of the manuscript. The temple was still a literary centre, and somewhere in its archives the prophet hid the book. Here, after Manasseh's death, the manuscript was discovered, brought to the new and reforming king, Josiah, accepted by him as a divinely inspired interpretation of

[1] 2 Kings xxi. 1–16; xxiii. 4; xxiv. 4; 2 Chron. xxxiii. 1–10; Isa. lxv. 3; Jer. vii. 17, 18, 31; viii. 2; xiv. 13; Zeph. i. 5.

Mosaism, and made the inspiration and guide of what was both a great religious revival and a great political reformation. To this codification, by an unknown prophet of the seventh century, of Mosaic precepts and principles, additions were made subsequently by other writers. The whole constitutes the Book of Deuteronomy. How much of it is truly Mosaic, how much of it was contributed by the unknown author in the reign of Manasseh, how much is of even subsequent date, it is not possible now to determine with absolute accuracy, nor is it necessary. The value of the Book of Deuteronomy does not depend upon its Mosaic authorship. Its value depends upon the fact that it is the expression of the faithful few in a degenerate age to the fundamental principles of the founder of their church and their nation.

I must refer the reader to other books for the reasons which have led scholars to the conclusion respecting the nature of the Book of Deuteronomy here so briefly stated.[1] Those reasons lie partly in the structure of the book itself. It consists in form of at least three distinct speeches, together with two poems, all of them put into the mouth of Moses. We must either suppose that Moses wrote these orations, or that they were taken down ver-

[1] The reader who desires a more thorough discussion of the character, contents, date, and authorship of the Book of Deuteronomy will find it in Professor George F. Moore's article on Deuteronomy in the *Cyclopædia Biblica*, and in Dr. Driver's Introduction to the Book of Deuteronomy in the *International Critical Commentary*.

batim by some contemporaneous reporter and then miraculously preserved through the intervening ages; or else, as the modern scholar does, that this form was employed by a later prophet in accordance with the custom of his times, to give dramatic effect to teaching which he intended should embody the spirit of Mosaic prophecy in its application to a later age. It depends partly on the way in which the laws in the Book of Deuteronomy fit the reforms initiated by Josiah, which are declared by the historian to have been based upon a law-book found in the temple. It depends partly on the title of the book itself, which signifies the "second law," or "second giving of the law," a title which, derived apparently from the earliest ages, at least indicates that from the earliest ages the book was regarded as a second or supplementary edition of the Mosaic legislation.

It will be seen from this brief sketch that those are mistaken who suppose that the new criticism regards the Book of Deuteronomy as a pious fraud. This would, indeed, seem to me to be an impossible hypothesis. Pious frauds have been perpetrated by pious men, it is true, but always either in some selfish or in some ecclesiastical interest — that is, either for the benefit of the writer or for the advantage of some churchly organization. An ethical book founded upon fraud would be an anomaly in literature. The Book of Deuteronomy is not an ecclesiastical book; it is not written in the interest of the priesthood; it is essentially an

ethical book. Its ethical standards are noble, its tone throughout pure and practical. It is morally inconceivable that such a book should be inspired by dishonest motives; equally inconceivable that a great moral revolution, like that wrought in the reign of Josiah, should be inspired by a pious fraud; and the modern critic does not regard the Book of Deuteronomy as a fraud. Books written by one man in the name and phraseology of another are not uncommon in literature. Defoe's history of the plague of London is not a fraud because it purports to be written by one who had passed through the scenes of the plague, though it was not written for fifty years afterward; Plato's report of the dialogues of Socrates is not a fraud because no man can tell how much of the thought in the dialogues belongs to Socrates and how much to Plato. Seven centuries after Moses a prophet writes a book, in which he incorporates the current traditions respecting Mosaic laws; elaborates, modifies, interprets, and applies them to existing social conditions; couches them in the language of the great statesman; after a fashion of historians in all ages puts them dramatically in the statesman's mouth; and then, as if to prevent any reader from imagining that he intends these manuscripts to be taken as actual rescripts of the original law, describes them as a second law.[1] To call this a fraud is to confound moral distinctions by treating a common literary method, pursued by writers in all

[1] Deut. xvii. 18, Septuagint version.

ages of the world without obloquy, as though it were a literary forgery.[1]

It is in the Book of the Covenant and in the Book of Deuteronomy that we are chiefly to find the political institutions of the Hebrew people, though light is thrown upon those institutions by incidental references in their sacred history. Nor is it difficult to trace the institutions which grew up in the eight centuries that intervened between these two publications, back to the essential principles involved in the Book of the Covenant: the religious basis of the state, the ethical nature of law, and its sanction in the conscience of the people.

All Oriental nations were absolute despotisms. In the Hebraic commonwealth the three departments of government, the executive, the legislative, and the judicial, were clearly discriminated. There were two representative assemblies: one the Jewish house of representatives, known as the Great Congregation, which reflected the popular will; the other a smaller body, the elders of the tribe or the nation, who acted as counselors of the executive, coöperated in making treaties, and exercised certain judicial functions. It was the Great Congregation that on the report of the twelve spies voted not to

[1] "The truth that 'the law came by Moses,' that the foundation of this sacred jurisprudence was laid by this founder, that the germs of the late growth proceeded from him, is not subverted by finding that from one period to another there was a gradual expansion." George P. Fisher, D. D., Address before International Congregational Council, Boston, Sept., 1899.

undertake the subjugation of Canaan, inducted into office Josiah, ratified the selection of Saul as king, carried into effect the proposal of Solomon to establish the ark of the Lord at Jerusalem.[1] It was the elders who made treaties, tried capital offenses, and enforced the execution of the laws. It was both judicial and executive.[2] There was a judiciary who were apparently elected by the people themselves;[3] who were forbidden to take fees from their suitors or to pay any regard to the social standing of those who had causes before them; and whose authority, it is clear from many instances in Jewish history, was far from being merely nominal.[4] Executive authority was, after the time of Saul, vested in a king, but his powers were limited. The Jewish monarch was a constitutional monarch; no foreigner could receive the imperial crown, no cavalry could be organized by the king to harry the kingdom, no heavy taxation could be levied for the benefit of the king and his court; he could establish no harem, he was himself subject to the laws of the realm.[5] That these restrictions on the authority of the king, though sometimes disregarded, were real, not merely formal, is evident from the fact that so unscrupulous a despot as Ahab was not able to accomplish so

[1] Num. xiv. 1–5, 10; xxvii. 18–23; 1 Chron. xiii. 1–8; 1 Kings viii. 1–5; Num. xi. 16, 17; Josh. ix. 18–21; Jer. xxvi. 10–16.

[2] Josh. ix. 18–21; Jer. xxvi. 10–16.

[3] Exod. xviii. 19–26; Deut. i. 9–14.

[4] Lev. xix. 15; xxiv. 22; Deut. i. 17; xvi. 19; Exod. xxii. 21.

[5] Deut. xvii. 14–20.

simple an act of despotism as the unjust absorption of a peasant's estate except by bribing the regularly constituted judges of the land.[1] With these provisions for the protection of the people from the despotic power of their rulers, unparalleled in that period of history, were other provisions equally remarkable for their justice and humanity. Mr. Robert Ingersoll has spoken of the cruel code of Moses, under which hundreds of crimes were punished with death. In point of fact, only twelve crimes were punished with death under this code,[2] whereas, as late as A. D. 1600, two hundred and sixty-three were punished with death in England. Attainder was forbidden,[3] human life, liberty, and property were guarded by special provisions in accordance with the spirit of the Ten Commandments — that is, the Hebrew constitution;[4] special provisions were made for the detection of secret crime;[5] public instruction was provided for both by laws imposing this duty on the parents and by provision for instruction through itinerant Levites.[6] The only limitation on free speech permitted was a provision making the preaching of false gods a capital offense; and even a false prophet could not ordinarily be punished by the state until the events

[1] 1 Kings xxi. 1–16.

[2] See a list of them in Smith's *Bible Dictionary*, article Laws of Moses.

[3] Deut. xxiv. 16.

[4] Deut. xxii. 8; Exod. xxii. 1–14; Deut. xxiv. 7.

[5] Deut. xxi. 1–9.

[6] Deut. vi. 7; Exod. xiii. 14, 15; Deut. xxxi. 9–13; xxxiii. 10; Neh. viii. 5–8; 2 Chron. xvii. 8, 9; xxx. 22; xxxv. 2, 3.

which he had assumed to foretell belied his predictions, proving him to be an impostor. The boldness of the ancient prophets, illustrated alike by the utterances which have been preserved to us and by dramatic incidents in their careers, could have been possible only in a country where freedom of speech was a fact as well as a theory.[1] With these provisions of justice were others, scarcely less remarkable, of a philanthropic character. Strangers were protected from oppression; the widow and the fatherless were especially guarded; wages were to be paid to the hired servant from day to day; gleanings in the vineyard were to be left for the poor; caste and class distinctions were prohibited.[2] This spirit of humanity is especially characteristic of the Book of Deuteronomy.[3]

[1] Deut. xviii. 21, 22; Jer. xxxviii.; 2 Sam. xii. 1–7; 1 Kings xxi. 17–24.

[2] Exod. xxii. 21, 22; Deut. i. 17; xvi. 19; xxiv. 14, 15; Lev. xix. 10, 15; xxiv. 22.

[3] "Humanity is the author's ruling motive, wherever considerations of religion or morality do not force him to repress it. Accordingly, great emphasis is laid upon the exercise of philanthropy, promptitude, and liberality towards those in difficulty or want, as the indigent in need of a loan (xv. 7–11; xxiii. 19, 20); a slave at the time of his manumission (xv. 13–15), a neighbor who has lost any of his property (xxii. 1–4), a poor man obliged to borrow on pledge (xxiv. 6, 12 f.), a fugitive slave (xxiv. 7), a hired servant (xxiv. 14 f.); and in the law for the disposition of the triennial tithe (xiv. 28 f.), the landless Levite (xii. 12, 18 f.; xiv. 27, 29; xvi. 11, 14; xxvi. 11, 12 f.), and the stranger — *i. e.*, the unprotected foreigner settled in Israel. The fatherless and the widow are repeatedly commended to the Israelite's charity or regard (xiv. 29; xvi. 11, 14; xxiv. 17, 19, 20, 21; xxvi. 12 f.; xxvii. 19; and the stranger, x. 19; xxvi. 11), especially at the

The laws of a nation are partly a record of its life, partly an interpretation of its ideals. That this is true of the laws of the Hebraic commonwealth is made clear both by their historical and their political books. The former contain many instances of violations of law by kings; the latter indict the people, and especially the nobility, for transgressing its humane provisions. Nevertheless, it would be impossible to mention any people of even a much later age than that of the Book of Deuteronomy, or even that of the restoration after the exile, whose law and constitution embodied an ideal so noble as that embodied in the Hebrew civil laws, or any people whose history shows the existence of political institutions so essentially just, free, and humane. Did this ideal exist only in the mind of Moses? Are the laws and institutions of the Hebraic commonwealth to be compared with the ideals of Plato's "Republic" or More's "Utopia"? or do those laws and constitutions represent a real, vital, national growth? Do we here see the fundamental principles of justice, liberty, and humanity suggested by a single prophetic genius? or do we see them on actual trial in a unique nation? Traditionalism holds the first opinion, modern scholarship holds the second. The second does not detract from but rather adds to

time of the great annual pilgrimages (xii. 12, 18; xiv. 27; xvi. 11, 14; xxvi. 11), when he and his household partook together before God of the bounty of the soil, and might the more readily respond to an appeal for benevolence." *The International Critical Commentary*, Deuteronomy, page xxiv.

the significance and the value of the revelation which that political code contains. Regarded as an attempt by a long line of prophets to embody in the institutions of the primitive people the essential motives of justice, liberty, and humanity, this code is more eloquent than when regarded as an ideal given only by one prophet, comprehended only by him, the serious execution of which was never really attempted.

The growth of the ecclesiastical code or canon law of Hebraism will be the subject of consideration in the next chapter.

CHAPTER VI

THE CANON LAW

THE doctrine that the Hebrew code is a production of the gradual growth of the Hebrew people is applied by the modern scholar to their religious as well as to their civil codes. He does not believe that the Levitical system of worship, as it is contained in the books of Exodus and Numbers and especially that of Leviticus, was given by God to Moses in the form in which it is there found; he supposes that only the germ of it existed in the time of Moses, and that from that germ the elaborate system grew by a gradual process reaching its final form in the time of Ezra, about the year 450 B. C.[1] To a certain school of theologians this hypo-

[1] All modern, that is, literary or non-traditional, students of the Bible accept this general view; that is, they agree that the germinant principles of the Levitical code are Mosaic, but its development was gradual, and its final codification, in the form in which we now possess it, was post-exilic and probably due to Ezra. Thus: "The principles by which the priesthood was to be guided were laid down, it may be supposed, in outline by Moses. In process of time, however, as national life grew more complex, and fresh cases requiring to be dealt with arose, these principles would be found no longer to suffice, and their extension would become a necessity. Especially in matters of ceremonial observance, which would remain naturally within the control of the priests,

thesis seems destructive not only of certain forms of worship, but of certain essential aspects of divine

regulations such as those enjoined in Exod. xx. 24–26; xxii. 29, 30; xxiii. 14–19 would not long continue in the same rudimentary state; fresh definitions and distinctions would be introduced, more precise rules would be prescribed for the method of sacrifice, the ritual to be observed by the priests, the dues which they were authorized to receive from the people, and other similar matters. After the priesthood had acquired, through the foundation of Solomon's Temple, a permanent centre, it is probable that the process of development and systematization advanced more rapidly than before. . . . Although, therefore, there are reasons for supposing that the Priests' Code assumed finally the shape in which we have it in the age subsequent to Ezra it rests ultimately upon an ancient traditional basis; and many of the institutions prominent in it are recognized, in various stages of their growth, by the earlier pre-exilic literature, by Deuteronomy and by Ezekiel." *Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament*, S. R. Driver, D. D., pp. 153, 154. "The code of Holiness comes into the historic field first in connection with Ezekiel. It is a codification of the immemorial practice of the priests of Jerusalem going back to Aaron and Moses. The priest-code and the document which contains it cannot be proven till Ezra's time. It was a larger codification of the priestly ritual and customs coming down by tradition from Moses and Aaron in the priestly circles of Jerusalem, which had been carefully conserved as holy relics in the priestly families among the exiles, as bearing in them sacred memories and holy promises." *The Higher Criticism of the Hexateuch*, by Charles A. Briggs, D. D., p. 157. Professor Wellhausen traces the development of the Jewish hierarchy and thus states his conclusion: "To any one who knows anything about history, it is not necessary to prove that the so-called Mosaic theocracy, which nowhere suits the circumstances of the earlier periods, and of which the prophets, even in their most ideal delineations of the Israelite state as it ought to be, have not the faintest shadow of an idea, is, so to speak, a perfect fit for post-exilian Judaism, and had its actuality only there. Foreign rulers had then relieved the Jews of all concern about secular affairs; they had it in their power, and were indeed compelled to give themselves wholly up to sacred things,

truth. The churchman, that is, he who attaches great value to the institutional forms of thought

in which they were left completely unhampered. Thus the temple became the sole centre of life, and the prince of the temple the head of the spiritual commonwealth, to which also the control of political affairs, so far as these were still left to the nation, naturally fell, there being no other head." *History of Israel*, Julius Wellhausen, pp. 150, 151. Dr. Bruce sees in the organization of a hierarchy and a sacrificial system the sign of the degeneracy of the Jewish people. He says, "Judaism, apart altogether from critical questions, was distinct from Mosaism. The distinguishing feature of Mosaism, as we have seen, was that it asserted the supremacy of the moral as compared with ritual. This fundamental principle the prophets reasserted with new emphasis and widened range of application, so showing themselves to be the true sons of Moses. On the other hand, the distinctive character of Judaism was that it put ritual on a level with morality, treated Levitical rules as of equal importance with the Decalogue, making no distinction between one part of the law and another, but demanding compliance with the prescribed ceremonial of worship as not less necessary to good relations with God than a righteous life. This was a new thing in Israel; and it was a great downcome; a descent from liberty to bondage, from evangelic to legal relations with God, from the spirit to the letter." He nevertheless thinks the Code was a providential provision to meet that degeneracy and keep alive the spirit of Mosaism, and further says, "It needs but a hasty and general survey of the priestly Code to be satisfied that there was much in it that tended towards the realization of the Mosaic ideal of a holy people faithful to Jehovah. One outstanding feature in it is the prominence given to the idea of *sin*. . . . It was well, it was a real advance in moral culture, that the religious system should be so altered as to develop a deeper consciousness of sin. It tended to a more exalted view of the holiness of God, and to greater heedfulness in conduct. . . . The centralization of worship in a single sanctuary, and the commitment of the whole sacrificial service into the hands of a priestly class, if an innovation as regards Mosaism, had certainly a tendency to prepare men for the religion of the spirit which came in with Jesus. In old times, it would appear, killing for food and

and worship as they are found in the church, generally also attaches great value to the sacrificial system as it is embodied in the church creed and expressed in the church ordinances. He regards the sacrificial system of the Old Testament as divinely organized and ordained; he reveres it as an ancient type foreshadowing the sacrifice of Christ and fulfilled in the Gospel; he looks upon it, therefore, as the most central feature of the Old Testament revelation; and it is not strange that he resists with the utmost vigor any view which treats the Levitical system as a human development, and the sacrificial system therein contained as temporary in its nature and now forever passed away, because it has fulfilled its purpose.[1] But to this

sacrifice were the same thing, and every man was his own priest. Sacrifice was a thing of daily occurrence, and an essential element of religion. The centralization of worship changed all that. Sacrifice became an affair of stated seasons, public sacrifice for all Israel threw into the shade private sacrifice, and the offering of victims became the business of a professional class. But religion is not an affair for two or three seasons in the year, but for daily life. Therefore men had to find out for themselves means for the culture of piety independent of Levitical ritual. . . . The synagogue, with its prayers and its reading of the scriptures, met the want, and educated men for a time when temple and sacrifice would finally disappear." *Apologetics*, by Alexander B. Bruce, D. D., pp. 262, 268, 269, 270.

[1] For a good statement of this view and a good presentation of the argument from the traditional point of view in favor of the Mosaic authorship of the Levitical Code, see *The Book of Leviticus*, by S. H. Kellogg, D. D., Expositor's Bible Series. The following paragraph (page 25) illustrates the spiritual interpretation of the Book of Leviticus by this school. After saying that one of the present uses of the "book is that it is a revelation of the charac-

view of the Levitical system the modern literary study of the Bible necessarily conducts us, and it would be a mistake for one who is attempting to interpret the methods and results of that study to conceal from himself or from his readers the conclusions to which it will necessarily lead. How the modern or literary or scientific student of the Bible thinks the Levitical code was gradually formed, and what providential purpose he thinks it was intended to serve in the history of the race, it is the object of this article to show. Theology is what men think about religion; ritual is the way in which they express their religious feeling when they unite to give it combined expression. It is this ritual, this religious expression of the life of Israel, we are to consider in this paper.

In the earlier and primitive states of society the family is the only organization. This is what is known as the patriarchal age. The father is the

ter of God," he says, "More particularly, Leviticus is of use to us now, as holding forth, in a singularly vivid manner, the fundamental conditions of true religion. The Levitical priesthood and sacrifices are no more, but the spiritual truth they represented abides and must abide forever; namely, that there is for sinful man no citizenship in the kingdom of God apart from a High Priest and Mediator with a propitiatory sacrifice for sin. These are days when many, who would yet be called Christians, belittle atonement, and deny the necessity of the shedding of substitutionary blood for our salvation. Such would reduce, if it were possible, the whole sacrificial ritual of Leviticus to a symbolic *self*-offering of the worshiper to God. But against this stands the constant testimony of our Lord and His apostles, that it is only through the shedding of blood, *not his own*, that man can have remission of sin."

king and lawgiver; he enacts the laws and directs the industries of the family. If the family is to fight in defense of itself or in attack on others the father is the commander-in-chief; he organizes his older sons and his servants, arms them and directs the battle. When the battle is over and thanksgiving is to be offered to the gods for the victory, the father doffs his military garments, puts on the garments of a priest, and conducts the worship. He is lawgiver, he is soldier, he is priest. But as society grows more complex and families are associated together in tribes, and later the tribes into a nation, a differentiation necessarily takes place. There become different classes for different vocations. There grows up an agricultural class, a mercantile class, a military class, — one to cultivate the soil, one to trade with other nations, one to fight the nation's battles; and by the same process of human development there grows up a worship-leading class. It is ordinarily called a priestly class. There is some protest in the modern community against a priestly class. But if we are to have government we must have men to govern; if industry, we must have men to work; if war, we must have men to fight; and if we are to have public worship, we must have men to conduct such worship. Thus society is developed out of the simple patriarchal form into the more complex form. The priestly order arises in this process as naturally and as necessarily as the industrial, the military, or the ruling order.

But this is not all. During the patriarchal age, this family is an itinerant family. It leads a nomadic life; has no permanent dwelling-place; lives in tents. Its religion moves with it, and its place of worship is as simple as its forms of worship. Whenever the tent is raised, the altar is put up; whenever the tent is taken down, the altar is left as a memorial, or is demolished. There are no temples, as there are no houses. But as society grows more complex and men begin to live in houses, and then in towns and cities, out of the altar grows the temple, as out of the father grew the priesthood; and there grow permanent places for worship, as there grow classes to lead the worship. And as society grows more wealthy, the place of worship grows more ornate and more elaborate. And with this growth of a priestly class and this accompanying growth of a temple or a church there grows a more elaborate ritual. The simple method of the primitive age no longer satisfies the highly developed society; worship grows more complex. While men are children, they bring their gifts to God, in the spirit with which little children bring their gifts to their parents. The boy is thankful — he brings an apple to his father as a token of his love; he has done wrong and he cannot quite get his stammering lips to say "I am sorry," so he offers some unusual service to his father as a token of his penitence. An offering is the child's natural expression of his childish emotion. So sacrifices grew up among men; they

offered their gifts to God as a token of their gratitude, or their penitence, or their desire for God's companionship. In the primitive society these gifts are primitive; but when the society has grown complex and the temple has been built and the priestly class organized, the sacrificial system is formulated also, and the sacrifices which were so simple and childlike become elaborate.

But the offering becomes deeper in its significance as well as more complex in its form. In the story of the Fall the fundamental facts of sin and its consequences are pictorially illustrated in a childhood story. One of the first effects of that sin, as there illustrated, and as seen in all human history, is a realization of the great difference between good and evil, and a consciousness of sin, growing out of this experience; a sense of separation from God, who is good, and a fear of him and a desire to flee from him. In the primitive state of society, man is comparatively innocent, because ignorant; he is not consciously guilty, because he does not know enough to discriminate between the good and the evil. But as society grows larger, more complex, more ebullient, man grows more subject to temptation and more liable to sin. And with this liability to sin there grows the consciousness of guilt; and with this consciousness of guilt, a sense of the separation from God which it involves. For if God is good and man is evil and man becomes conscious of this and conscious also of the separation between good and evil, he becomes

conscious of the separation between God and himself. Thus the religious service is transformed, not only by the growth in complexity of society, but by the growth in moral consciousness of the individuals who compose society. Formerly, the father was only the leader of worship; now the priest becomes the necessary mediator; men think that they cannot go to God direct; because of the separation which sin has produced, they must have some holy priest to go to him on their behalf and in their stead. Once the altar was simply the place where men had met God; now the temple comes to be regarded as the only place where they can meet God; they think he is nowhere else save in this temple, under this roof, surrounded by this incense, sung to by this choir. Once they thought any gift would serve that was brought to God as an expression of their good will; now there is a prescribed ritual and the belief that sinful man can come to God only in the method which has been so prescribed.

The religion of the Book of the Covenant, the oldest book in the Bible, embodies the primitive or childhood conception of religion; the religion of an age when people have not yet become deeply conscious either of their own sin or of the holiness of God, and therefore not deeply conscious of any separation between themselves and God; the religion of an age when as yet the father is the natural priest, when any place will serve as a place of worship, when any form will serve as a means of

approach to the Father. Accordingly, in this Book of the Covenant there is only one reference to priests, and that in the introduction to it, unless the declaration that the entire people shall be a kingdom of priests belongs to the Book of the Covenant, as probably it does belong to the epoch which that book represents; there is only one reference to sacrifices, and that in connection with the Passover, — and it is to be remembered that the Passover sacrifice was offered by the fathers for their families, not by the priests; and there is no reference to any sacred place or temple where worship is to be conducted, and only one to an altar; that reference is as follows: —

"Gods of silver and gods of gold ye shall not make unto you. An altar of earth thou shalt make unto me, and shalt sacrifice thereon thy burnt-offerings, and thy peace-offerings, thy sheep, and thine oxen: in every place where I record my name I will come unto thee, and I will bless thee. And if thou make me an altar of stone, thou shalt not build it of hewn stone: for if thou lift up thy tool upon it, thou hast polluted it." [1]

The meaning is clear: Jehovah desires no elaboration of decoration: Let the altar be of earth such as any man can easily cast up with a spade; or if the people are not satisfied with an altar of earth, and want to make one of stone, it must be of the simplest kind; it must not be hewn stone; and they must not imagine that there is but one

[1] Exod. xx. 23–25.

place where acceptable worship can be offered; wherever they are, there they may put their altar; wherever they are, there Jehovah will come and bless them.[1]

Such are the liturgical characteristics of this Book of the Covenant. God is a righteous God, who demands righteousness of his children, and demands nothing else. There is no one sacred place — he may be worshiped anywhere; no great temple — an altar of earth will serve; no priesthood — the people is a kingdom of priests, and any man may offer sacrifice.

But at the time when this simple religion was set forth by Moses, the religions of the surrounding nations were complicated and elaborate. In Phœnicia, in Egypt, in Babylon, there were a sacred priesthood, a holy temple, and an elaborate sacrificial system. In the expressive language of Professor Rawlinson, "The Temple dominated over the Palace and is itself dominated by the Tomb, both the Temple and the Tomb being the expression of religious ideas." He thus graphically describes the ecclesiastical character of the community in which emancipated Israel had been subject. "Everywhere in Egypt gigantic structures upreared themselves into the air, enriched with all that Egyptian art could supply of painted and sculptured decoration, dedicated to the honor, and bearing the sacred name, of some divinity. The great temple of each city was the centre of its life.

[1] See Gen. xxviii. 16.

A perpetual ceremonial of the richest kind went on within its walls, along its shady corridors, or through its sunlit courts — long processions made their way up or down its avenues of sphinxes — incense floated in the air — strains of music resounded without pause — all that was brightest and most costly met the eye on every side — and the love of spectacle, if not deep religious feeling, naturally drew to the sanctuary a continual crowd of worshipers or spectators, consisting partly of strangers, but mainly of the native inhabitants, to whom the ceremonies of their own dear temple, their pride and their joy, furnished a perpetual delightful entertainment. At times the temple limits were overpassed, and the sacred processions were carried through the streets of the town, attracting the gaze of all; or, embarking on the waters of the Nile or of some canal derived from it, glided with stately motion between the houses on either side, a fairer and brighter sight than ever. The calendar was crowded with festivals, and a week rarely passed without the performance of some special ceremony, possessing its own peculiar attractions. Foreigners saw with amaze the constant round of religious or semi-religious ceremonies, which seemed to know no end, and to occupy almost incessantly the main attention of the people. Nor was the large share which religion had in the outer life of the nation the sole or the most important indication of the place which it held in their thoughts and regards. Religion

permeated the whole being of the people."[1] The Hebrew slaves breathed an air of formalism.

But this religion was not ethical. It did not concern itself with the moral life of the people. It was purely theological and ceremonial. With this elaborate system of religious ceremonialism the simple religion of Mosaism, that God is a righteous God and demands righteousness of his children and demands nothing else, came into uncompromising conflict. The Levitical Code, as the literary critic interprets the Old Testament, is the product of this conflict between the simple principles of Mosaism and the elaborate ritualism of paganism, much as the mediæval religion was the product of the conflict between the simple teachings of Jesus Christ and the elaborate ritualism of pagan Rome which those teachings were destined to supplant. If a stream of pure water is to wash out a sewer, it can do so only by entering the sewer. If a new life is to purify a community, it can do so only by entering into that community, and it must, in the very process of purifying, take on to some extent the impurities from which it is to cleanse the community.

In the Old Testament we can trace this process. We see this simple religion of Mosaism — God is a righteous God, who demands righteousness of his children and who demands nothing else; they may bring their offerings where they will, as they will,

[1] *History of Ancient Egypt*, George Rawlinson, M. A., vol. i. pp. 321, 322.

through whose hands they will — we find this religion entering into the life of the nation. At first there is no temple, no one place of religious service where alone sacrifice may be offered, no priestly order which alone may offer sacrifice. Gideon offers sacrifice at Ophrah; Saul at Gilgal; Samuel and David at Bethlehem; Elijah at Carmel.[1] Nor are these violations of the divine law; they are clearly approved — sometimes approved by a signal revelation of the divine favor. When Elijah, who is no priest, offers the sacrifice on Mount Carmel, the fire falls from heaven in witness that God has approved his offering. It is clear that during all this period of their history the children of Israel knew no law requiring all men to go up to Jerusalem and offer their sacrifices at the temple there, or requiring all sacrifices to be offered by priests. As during this early history of Israel there is no exclusive priesthood, no temple, no definite place of worship, so there is no elaborate ritual. The sacrifices during that early history are, for the most part, simple thank-offerings. Outside the Levitical code there are no indications of offerings to atone for sin.

But the nation is growing, not only in complexity of life, but also in moral consciousness. Its prophetic teachers, its providential schooling, are not in vain. The people grow in the knowledge of good and evil. Their appreciation of the holiness

[1] Judges vi. 24; 1 Sam. xv. 21; xvi. 5; xx. 6; 1 Kings xviii. 29–38.

of God is developed; their consciousness of their sins against him is deepened. They feel increasingly the moral separation between good and evil, and therefore between a good God and an evil nation. At the same time they are growing, in some other directions, not so wisely nor so well. They mingle with other peoples and borrow from them. They abandon the simplicity of their primitive republicanism and adopt the monarchical system. The nation becomes a highly organized nation, with a standing army and a permanent civil administration. It is not strange that it borrows from other nations religious as well as political ideas and methods. Sometimes the people worship Jehovah, but betrayed in images borrowed from Egypt; sometimes they substitute the worship of Baal and Astarte for that of Jehovah; sometimes they suffer the double worship to be carried on contemporaneously and even in the same sacred edifice.[1] Imitating their neighbors in ecclesiastical as in civil matters, the people build a temple, ordain a priesthood, organize a sacrificial system, and unconsciously tend to centralize all worship in the temple, to confine all religious functions to the priesthood, to eschew all forms of worship not conducted according to the ritual. At length they are carried into captivity. For seventy years they live exiles in Babylon, separated from their holy city, their temple, their priesthood, their

[1] 1 Kings xii. 28, 29; Judges ii. 11; vi. 25; 1 Kings xvi. 31, 32; xi. 5; 2 Kings xxiii. 13.

sacrificial system. Their religious life begins to take on new forms. They gather together their sacred books: the Bible grows into a recognized collection of sacred literature. They organize places for religious instruction and religious worship without sacrifice: the synagogue is born, and public and family prayer appear. They learn that God is not a Palestinian God, that he is to be met with elsewhere than in the temple of Solomon or the city of David. Ezekiel sees a vision of Jehovah in the desert; the Great Unknown beholds the manifestation of him in the starry firmament.[1] Because the people scorn their captives they scorn their captives' gods. Jehovah is no longer merely a God above all other gods, he is the only God; the gods of the pagans are for the first time called not-gods.[2] The people are learning that their God is the God of all nations; that all places are sacred places; that he may be approached by prayer without a sacrifice and by the layman without a priest. The New Judaism is born, and it is, as so many new births are, a restoration of the oldest Judaism, a return to the truths of the Book of the Covenant, never really accepted by the people, yet never wholly forgotten by their greatest spiritual leaders.

At the same time, because the people are shut off from those methods of worship to which they have been accustomed, they long to reëstablish them. Their patriotism and their religious institutions become inseparably connected. Judaism

[1] Ezek. i.; Isaiah xl. 25, 26. [2] Jer. ii. 11; xvi. 20.

means to them a return to the Holy City, and that means also a return to all that the Holy City connotes — their own temple, their own priesthood, their own liturgical system. And when the time of the restoration comes, and they return to their native land, many of the most deeply religious among them are eager to rebuild the temple, reestablish the priesthood, reorganize the ancient service. But all this tends to an excessive sacerdotalism, and that in turn, by a natural reaction, to vigorous protests against sacerdotalism. An ecclesiasticism and a Puritanism grow up together. The representatives of the ecclesiastical party urge the rebuilding of the temple, the reconstruction of the priesthood, and the rehabilitation of the liturgy.[1] Now for the first time appears the doctrine that sacrifice can be acceptably offered only in Jerusalem; that it is profanation for any other than a priest to offer it; that only by sacred sacrifice so offered in that temple can sin be atoned and the sinful soul purified.[2] But the representatives of the Puritan party will hear nothing of all this. They protest against it in utterances quite as vigorous as any of Luther's against Romanism, or any of the Puritans of the seventeenth century against sacerdotalism. Even before the restoration, Isaiah,

[1] Hag. chap. i. See Ezra *passim*.

[2] Deut. xii. 6, 11, 14, 26; 2 Chron. vii. 12; Lev. xvii. 4, 8, 9; xvii. 11, with Heb. ix. 22; 2 Chron. xxvi. 18–21. Uzziah's (or Azariah's) punishment for offering sacrifice is not mentioned in Kings: 2 Kings xiv. 21, 22.

one of the greatest of the prophets, sees the growth of this ecclesiasticism contemporaneously with the moral deterioration of the nation, and protests against it. He says: —

"Hear the word of the Lord, ye rulers of Sodom; give ear unto the law of our God, ye people of Gomorrah. To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith the Lord: I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he-goats. When ye come to appear before me, who hath required this at your hand, to trample my courts? Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me; new moon and sabbath, the calling of assemblies, — I cannot away with iniquity and the solemn meeting. Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth: they are a trouble unto me; I am weary to bear them. And when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you: yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear: your hands are full of blood. Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil: learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow." [1]

Amos, the first of the great prophets whose written utterances have been preserved to us, is equally explicit, and in one respect even more so, as in the following passage: —

"I hate, I despise your feasts, and I will take no delight in your solemn assemblies. Yea, though ye offer

[1] Isa. i. 10–17.

me your burnt offerings and meal offerings, I will not accept them: neither will I regard the peace offerings of your fat beasts. Take thou away from me the noise of thy songs; for I will not hear the melody of thy viols. But let judgment roll down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream." [1]

He does not believe that this liturgical system dates from the days of Moses. He says: —

"Did ye bring unto me sacrifices and offerings in the wilderness forty years, O house of Israel?" [2]

Jeremiah is still more explicit in his affirmation that this sacrificial system is not a revival of Mosaism but a corruption of it: —

"Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: Add your burnt offerings unto your sacrifices, and eat ye flesh. For I spake not unto your fathers, nor commanded them in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, concerning burnt offerings or sacrifices: but this thing I commanded them, saying, Hearken unto my voice, and I will be your God, and ye shall be my people: and walk ye in all the way that I command you, that it may be well with you." [3]

[1] Amos v. 21–24. [2] *Ibid.* v. 25.

[3] Jer. vii. 21–23. The conservative or traditional critics quote Jer. xxxiii. 18 as evidence that Jeremiah means by his language here, not to deny that God commanded sacrifices through Moses, but only, as Dr. C. von Orelli puts it, to deny "that sacrifice was the motive or occasion, and so the substantive content of God's legislation." *The Prophecies of Jeremiah*, by Dr. C. von Orelli, p. 78. The same interpretation is more fully given in the *Bible Commentary* on Jer. vii. 21–23. The interpretation which I accept is the one adopted by the modern school, as by George Adam Smith, for example, who says that Jeremiah "distinctly declares that in the wilderness God prescribed no ritual to Israel." *The Book of the Twelve Prophets*, vol. i. p. 171, note. See also p. 104.

That Amos and Jeremiah were correct, that the Levitical system does not date from the days of Moses, that it is no part of that simple, primitive religion which finds its exposition in the Book of the Covenant, appears absolutely certain to the literary or scientific student of the Bible. This appears to him clear from the inconsistency of the Levitical code in its form and to some extent in its spirit with the Book of the Covenant, admittedly the oldest and most authentic interpretation of the spirit of Moses and his teaching; from its palpable ill-adaptedness to the nomadic life in the wilderness; from the fact that it was not only disregarded during all the earlier history of Israel, but disregarded with never a sign of divine disapproval, and sometimes with explicit signs of divine approval; from the nature of the ritual itself, and its kinship in form with that of pagan peoples; from the testimony of the great prophets already cited; and from the further consideration to be pointed out that it has unmistakably served its purpose, and is now no longer recognized as an integral part of Judaism by any considerable number of Jewish teachers.

The literary or scientific student does not, then, believe that the Levitical code embodies a divinely ordained system revealed to Moses, supernaturally preserved, and intended, either in itself or as a foreshadowing of the divine sacrifice, to be of eternal value to the human race. But neither does he believe it to be of pagan origin, an impediment to

the growth of the human race, because a mere corruption of spiritual religion. We are not left to reject as wholly false every religious movement which is not wholly true. The Puritans were mistaken in thinking that there is no place in God's kingdom for a Quaker no-ritual; the Cavaliers were mistaken in thinking that there is no place for a Puritan no-ritual; the Roman Catholics were mistaken in the Middle Ages in thinking that there is no place for a Protestant no-ritual. And the Quakers, the Puritans, and the Protestants were equally mistaken in thinking that there is no place in God's world for the ritual which they sometimes hated and sometimes scorned. For God opens more doors to himself than we imagine, and lets us come to him by what pathway we will: with incense or without incense; with candles and an altar or with communion-table and no altar; through the expression of the silent prayer, or through the expression of the Book of Common Prayer, or through the expression of the Roman ritual in the elevation of the host.

The Levitical code, then, in the form in which we now find it in the Bible is not, — to this conclusion I have been endeavoring to conduct the reader, — a divine and eternal order of worship, nor yet the revelation of a divine and eternal principle of worship; it is the codification of ecclesiastical customs which had grown up through eight or nine centuries of Jewish life; it borrowed most of its form and some portion of its underlying theological

conception from pagan religions. Yet it was not wholly Jewish, neither was it wholly pagan ; it was a combination of paganism and Mosaism, a graft of the former upon the latter, or the transformation of the former by the spirit of the latter. But the customs embodied in this code furnished a protection to the religion of Israel at a time when a more purely spiritual and less formal religion would not have sufficed for that purpose. It had within itself, as we shall see, elements which insured its destruction when it had served its purpose; that purpose was to furnish a bridge across which a people not fully emancipated might pass from paganism, which is founded on the fear of the gods, to Mosaism, which is founded on reverence for the one and only God, and so to Christianity, which is founded on God's love for man and the possibility of man's spiritual union with him.

There are two methods by which a great reform may be accomplished, — the iconoclastic and the constructive. Politically France illustrates the one method, England the other. In both countries had grown up a feudal system; France destroyed it in a single revolution, gathered the people in a general assembly, and undertook to build from the foundation a republic consecrated to liberty, equality, and fraternity. England in successive epochs poured a new and popular spirit into her old forms: she retained the crown as a symbol of the nation, but without political power; the prime minister, but made him the people's servant; the Parliament,

but centralized its authority in the House of Commons, that is, of the common people. The French seemed at the time the more expeditious; the English has proved the more efficacious. The contrast between Puritanism and Episcopacy illustrates the same principle in the religious realm. Puritanism repudiated the bishops, dissolved the old ecclesiastical organization, set aside the altar, the liturgy, and the priesthood, made of the temple a meeting-house, treated the minister as only a layman intrusted with a temporary function, resolved, in a word, to dispense with everything which the mediæval church held dear, because everything which it held dear had been corrupted to base uses. Episcopalianism retained the bishop, but bereft him of his autocratic powers; called her clergy priests, but refused to regard them as necessary mediators between the laity and God; retained the altar, but not the sacrifice of the mass; preserved the ritual, but set it to new uses. The Reformation was not less in the Episcopal than in the Puritan churches; the one was not less than the other the vehicle of a new spirit. Both methods of reform are legitimate; each has its perils. The dangers of the radical method are those of revolution and reaction; the dangers of the conservative method are those of unconscious return through the old forms to the old evils which they embodied.

The history of Israel illustrates both of these methods. The paganism which surrounded Israel was thoroughly false: false in its conception of

God as an unmoral force; false in its notion that he is a God of wrath and must be appeased by blood; false in its notion that his favor can be secured by sacrifice; false in its notion that he calls on his children for any other offering than to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with him. There were two ways in which this falsity might be overthrown. One was the way of the prophets, the Hebrew Puritans, the radicals of that age. It was directly to attack the ceremonial system; to affirm, as one Hebrew Psalmist did, that God desires not sacrifices; as Isaiah did, that he did not require them; as Amos did, that he despised feast days and incense and would not accept their offerings; as Micah did, that he required nothing but justice, mercy, and humility.[1] The other way was that of the priests, the ecclesiastics, the churchmen of that age. It was to accept the spiritual truth of Mosaism and pour it into the formalism which had been borrowed, but modified, from the pagan nations, and make paganism itself the vehicle of divine truth. This method gave birth to the Levitical code; which was like the pagan ceremonialism in that it prescribed a temple, an altar, a priesthood, a sacrificial system, but which was unlike the pagan code in five very important particulars.

I. In pagan countries the ecclesiastical system, with its priests, its temple, and its worship, was independent of the people. The Church was a

[1] Psalm li. 16; Isa i. 11–15; Amos v. 21, 22; Micah vi. 6–8.

department of the State and supported out of the revenues of the State. The priests were State officials ranking next to the king himself, if not outranking him. In Egypt a considerable portion of the land, perhaps as much as one third, was made over to the priestly class; sacred slaves belonging to the priests cultivated the lands for them; their estates were exempt from taxation; their wealth was continually augmented by the voluntary gifts of the devout or the more reluctant contributions of the superstitious; they were, in short, the wealthiest, as they were the most privileged, class in the country.[1] A similar independence of the church was manifested far down into European history. In mediæval Europe the church was supported by payments for ecclesiastical services, which, at first voluntary, became compulsory; by tithes collected by force of law like other taxes; and by rentals of land, from one tenth to one fifth of which, in the time of Henry VIII., even in England, had passed into the possession of the ecclesiastics.[2] In the Levitical church the priests could own no land; the church was not supported by the State; the offerings which sustained it were voluntary. It is true that the Levitical code fixed on one tenth of the agricultural produce as a proper proportion to be given to the support of the church,[3] but there was no means of collecting this tenth

[1] Rawlinson's *History of Ancient Egypt*, i. 449, 450.

[2] Hallam's *Constitutional History of England*, chap. ii.

[3] Lev. xxvii. 30–32; Deut. xiv. 22–28.

from those who did not choose to give it. The Levitical church was dependent on the free-will offerings of the people, enforced only by public sentiment.

II. As the support of the church was not compulsory, so neither were its services. The pagan code made sacrifice obligatory. To refuse to sacrifice to the gods was to hazard one's fortune, one's family, one's life. But the Levitical code declares that all offerings must be the free-will gift of the worshiper. "He shall offer it of his own voluntary will at the door of the tabernacle," is the provision of the code in its introductory paragraph.[1] It is true that our revised version gives a radically different translation: "He shall offer it at the door of the tent of meeting that he may be accepted before the Lord." It is doubtful which of these translations is correct: whether the meaning is that the worshiper shall offer a sacrifice which is acceptable to the Lord, — that is, in accordance with God's will; or whether he shall offer one that is acceptable to himself, — that is, of his own free will. But whichever of these translations we accept as correct, there is no doubt that the former epitomizes the spirit of the Levitical code. Its provisions, as my brother, the late Dean of the New York University Law School, once said to me, are regulative, not mandatory, and no lawyer would think of interpreting them otherwise. They regulate customs already existing; they do not

[1] Lev. i. 3.

require a service now first prescribed. "If," says the code, "his offering be a burnt sacrifice of the herd, let him offer a male without blemish. . . . If his offering be of the flocks, . . . he shall bring it a male without blemish. . . . If the burnt sacrifice for his offering to the Lord be of fowls, then he shall bring his offering of turtle-doves, or of young pigeons. . . . If thou bring an oblation of a meat offering baken in the oven, it shall be unleavened cakes mingled with oil, or unleavened wafers anointed with oil." All is voluntary; all is conditioned on the free will of the worshiper. The offerer may bring or not; though, if he brings, the code defines certain qualities of the gift and what shall be done with it. The reader will search in vain in the Levitical code for any penalty pronounced against the non-worshiper, and the history of Israel in vain for any penalty inflicted on one for refusing to worship.

III. This voluntary character of the sacrificial system of the Levitical code is emphasized and the principle involved in it is carried out in another principle of that code which is even more important, and is in quite as striking a contrast with the sacrificial systems of the pagan religions: the offerings were inexpensive. In paganism the value of the sacrifice was estimated by its cost. Thousands of cattle, costly incense, prisoners taken captive in war, sometimes the child of the worshiper, were offered as sacrifices. The aim was to appease the wrath of the gods, or to satisfy their supposed

insatiable desire, and nothing was esteemed too precious for this purpose. The prevented sacrifice of Isaac by Abraham, the accomplished sacrifice of his daughter by Jephtha, the legendary self-sacrifice of Curtius to save Rome from the widening chasm which threatened to engulf it, are illustrations familiar to every reader of this character of sacrifice prior to or outside the influence of Mosaism. The oft-quoted text of Micah, "Will Jehovah be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?" refers doubtless to this pagan conception of sacrifice, with which his hearers were only too familiar.

The spirit of the Levitical code was wholly opposed to this conception. Human sacrifice was unknown; hecatombs were unknown; the value of sacrifice was never measured by its costliness. It was true that the worshiper must not bring to God the lame, the halt, the blind; that is, he must not offer to God what he would offer to no one else, because that would be no true offering, but mere false pretense. But so that it was without blemish he might bring what offering he would, — a bullock, a lamb, a goat, a pair of doves, a sheaf of wheat. The value of the offering depended, not on its cost, but on the experience which it represented. The three divine experiences of a soul toward its God were all recognized in the Levitical code, and each was represented by its appointed

expression. The worshiper might come to the temple conscious of sin and desiring to express his penitence; then he brought a sin-offering or a trespass-offering. He might come with a desire to renew his consecration to God and reaffirm his purpose to devote his life to God's service; then he brought a burnt offering, the consumption of which by fire represented his purpose to offer to Jehovah all that he had. He might come with a heart full of gladness and a desire to express his gratitude to and his joy in the Lord; then he brought a peace-offering or a thank-offering. The offerings were classified, not according to their costliness, but according to the expression which they represented; and if they did not represent the real and vital experience, no cost in the offering could make it acceptable to Jehovah. A single quotation from this code will serve to illustrate this general principle: —

"If a soul sin, and commit a trespass against the Lord, and lie unto his neighbor in that which was delivered him to keep, or in fellowship, or in a thing taken away by violence, or hath deceived his neighbor; or have found that which was lost, and lieth concerning it, and sweareth falsely; in any of all these that a man doeth, sinning therein: then it shall be, because he hath sinned and is guilty, that he shall restore that which he took violently away, or the thing which he hath deceitfully gotten, or that which was delivered him to keep, or the lost thing which he found, or all that about which he hath sworn falsely; he shall even restore it in the prin-

cipal, and shall add the fifth part more thereto, and give it unto him to whom it appertaineth, in the day of his trespass offering. And he shall bring his trespass offering unto the Lord, a ram without blemish out of the flock, with thy estimation, for a trespass offering, unto the priest: and the priest shall make an atonement for him before the Lord: and it shall be forgiven him for anything of all that he hath done in trespassing therein." [1]

Sacrifice did not take the place of righteousness. Before the sin-offering could be given to the Lord, reparation must be made to the one who had been wronged. Two centuries after this code had been formulated, Christ said to his disciples, "If thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee; leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift." [2] He did but give expression in a slightly different form to the essential principle embodied in this ecclesiastical code — that restoration must precede sacrifice. So far as we know the history of those times, no such abuse ever grew up under the Levitical code as that form of indulgence which aroused the indignation of Luther in the sixteenth century.

IV. Still more important is another principle contained in this code, so radical that I suspect its statement here will arouse the suspicion, if it does not evoke the stout denial, of the reader: the sac-

[1] Lev. vi. 2–7. [2] Matt. v. 23, 24.

rifices of the Levitical code were never offered to satisfy the wrath of God, nor as a substitute for penalty pronounced against sin, nor as a means of securing divine pardon and a restoration of divine favor. Sacrifice and penalty are never connected in the Old Testament; sacrifices are never offered by the sinner as a means of securing remission of penalty. The Levitical sacrifice was a means for the purification of the sinner, not for the pacification of Jehovah.[1] The curious ceremonial which, according to this code, accompanied and distinguished the so-called Day of Atonement illustrates in a striking manner this principle. On that day, from two goats brought out before the congregation, one was selected by lot as a sacrifice to Jehovah, the other as a scapegoat. The first was killed before the Lord; on the head of the other — the scapegoat — the sins of the people were laid in confession by the priest, and he was then led off into the wilderness, that so he might "bear upon him all their iniquities to a solitary land," — a land from which he could never return to bring back to the people the sins from which they were thus delivered.[2] The significance of this primitive object-lesson should be as clear to us now as it was to the people then. In it there was no suggestion of a

[1] Lev. xvii. 11, "it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul," will be regarded by some as an exception to this statement. If so it stands alone; but I do not think it is an exception; there is nothing in the phraseology that implies the pacification of an angry God.

[2] Lev. xvi.

wrath to be appeased, or a penalty to be escaped; its suggestion was sin removed and a people set free from its burden. The object of sin-offering in paganism was always to appease the wrath of the gods; in the Levitical system, to purify the soul of the worshiper. In paganism sacrifice was a means of escape from penalty; in Leviticalism, a means of escape from sin.

V. Finally, the Levitical code provided for its own destruction. In that code it was expressly provided that sacrifice could be offered only in the temple at Jerusalem by the priests. In the beginning, as we have seen, this was not the case: sacrifice might be offered anywhere by any devout soul.[1] Whatever the intent of the framer of this exclusive provision, its providential intent is clearly indicated by the result which it produced. When the city of Jerusalem was captured and the temple destroyed, the entire sacrificial system and the entire hierarchy organized to administer it came to an end. Both have now entirely disappeared from Judaism. Not a trace is left behind of either altar, sacrifice, or priest. The simple and fundamental principles of the early Mosaism remain — the faith that God is a righteous God, and demands righteousness of his children and demands nothing else. But no Jew offers sacrifice; no Jewish priest conducts worship; no Jewish altar or temple exists in all the world. No longer anywhere is heard the lowing of cattle, the bleating of sheep, the cooing

[1] Compare Lev. xvii. 4, 8, 9, with Exod. xx. 24.

of doves, no longer anywhere are seen the rivers of blood in connection with any worship of the one God such as characterized the temple at Jerusalem. The sacrificial code has served its temporary purpose and has perished absolutely, leaving in Judaism no remnant in existing institutions even to memorialize it.

It is true that some remnants of this sacrificial system have passed over into the Christian church. They are seen in the bloodless sacrifice of the mass in the Roman Church and in some Anglican churches, and in clauses stating in terms a sacrificial theory of the atonement in some Protestant creeds. Occasionally still is heard the doctrine, supposed to have been foreshadowed by the Levitical code, that a great sacrifice has been offered once for all as a means of satisfying divine justice, if not of appeasing divine wrath and securing a purchased pardon which God cannot consistently grant without an innocent victim to bear the penalty which of right should be inflicted upon the guilty. But this remnant of an ancient ritual gradually disappears before the growing faith in the love of God, as the snows even in the remoter crevices of the rock are melted by the spring sun; gradually we are learning that sacrifice is not a means by which penitence secures pardon, but the method by which mercy confers life. It is not the child's sacrifice which wins forgiveness from the mother; it is the mother's sacrifice which wins repentance from the child. It is not the sacrifice offered by man, or on

his behalf, which purchases remission of penalty from a righteous judge; it is the sacrifice offered by God and on his behalf which achieves remission of sin for the repentant sinner. Slowly, very slowly, we are learning the meaning veiled in that solemn and splendid story miscalled the sacrifice of Isaac, — "God will provide himself the lamb for a burnt offering, my son." [1]

In Homer, to ward off a pestilence which Phœbus, in her wrath, has sent upon the Greeks, "the wise Ulysses" offers up a

> "hallowed hecatomb
> To Phœbus, for the Greeks; that so the god
> Whose wrath afflicts us sore may be appeased."

In the Fourth Gospel the Apostle John declares that

> "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life."

In the pagan conception God is wrathful; in the Christian conception God is love. In the pagan conception man is wiser and better than the gods who are destroying him; in the Christian conception man is destroying himself by his own ignorance and sin. In the pagan conception the sacrifice is offered by man to the gods; in the Christian conception it is offered by God for man. In the pagan conception the peril comes from God to man, the sacrifice goes from man to God; in the

[1] Gen. xxii. 8.

Christian conception the peril comes from man to himself, the salvation comes from God for man, through God's act of *self*-sacrifice. The history of sacrifice in the Old Testament is the history of the process by which the pagan conception was transformed into the Christian conception; the Levitical Code is the bridge by which Israel passed over from the pagan belief that sacrifice is a condition of forgiveness which God exacts, to the Christian doctrine that self-sacrifice is the method by which God confers forgiveness.

CHAPTER VII

HEBREW FICTION

THE suggestion that there are works of fiction in the Bible certainly at one time would have aroused protest, if not resentment, and it is possible that there may still linger in the minds of some a remnant of this feeling. It is largely due to two reasons. The first is an impression that the suggestion of fiction in the Bible has been invented by those who desire to eliminate from it the supernatural. Doubtless it is true that there are some critics who desire to eliminate the supernatural from the Bible, and who therefore seek to show that everything which seems to be supernatural is imaginative. This is not the scientific, it is not the literary, spirit.[1] The true scientific spirit does not assume that there can be nothing supernatural in life; it studies life to ascertain

[1] Dean Farrar's statement of his own position on this subject may be accepted as an admirable definition of the general position of all evangelical scholars of the modern or evolutionary school. He says: "I withhold my credence from no occurrence — however much it may be called 'miraculous' — which is adequately attested; which was wrought for adequate ends; and which is in accordance with the revealed laws of God's immediate dealing with man." *The Bible*, by F. W. Farrar, D. D., F. R. S., p. 241.

what is in it. The truly literary spirit does not assume that there is nothing supernatural in literature; it studies literature to ascertain what is its character and what are the motive and purpose of each author. No literary critic would think of classifying the story of the resurrection of Jesus Christ among works of fiction or imagination. He might think the narrative incorrect, but he would not doubt that it belongs among historical works — that is, that the authors believed that they were narrating facts. The mere circumstance that an incident narrated in the Old Testament is extraordinary does not afford the slightest indication that it is fiction. The question whether any narrative is history or fiction is not identical with the question whether it is true or false. The literary classification of a narrative depends upon the motive of the author, not upon the accuracy of the narrative. The author of fiction gives free play to his imagination, and his work is not the less fictitious because he interweaves some historical truth with his imaginative narrative; the historian assumes to narrate facts, and his work is history despite the fact that he may be misled into the most serious errors in his narrative. Herodotus is a writer of history; although Macaulay assures us that "he is from the first to the last chapter an inventor." Dumas is a writer of fiction; although his editor affirms that "contemporary authority can be cited for every anecdote or incident not directly connected with the distinctively romantic

portions of the narrative." The question whether any particular narrative in the Old Testament — the Book of Jonah, for example — is history or fiction is not to be determined by considering whether the book contains extraordinary events, but by considering the question whether its general spirit and structure are such as to justify the belief that the author thought himself narrating facts as they actually occurred, or whether he consciously gave a free rein to his imagination as he wrote.

A second reason for the objection to the suggestion that there is fiction in the Bible is a remnant of a Puritan prejudice which everywhere except in its relation to the Bible has long since disappeared. The Puritans opposed all manifestations of the imagination. They destroyed the pictured windows in the churches; took down the pictures from the walls of the houses; broke in pieces the statues in the niches; closed the doors of the theatres and forbade the drama; and banished the works of fiction from their tables. No doubt some readers of this article can remember, in their own childhood days, how novels of every description were looked upon askance, if not with absolute reprobation, in their own circles. We have emerged into an epoch in which this banishing of the imagination is no longer permitted because it is no longer necessary. We admit the pictured windows to the churches; we hang pictures on the walls of our houses; we have replaced the statues even of

pagan deities in their niches, reopened the doors of the theatres, and novels lie on all our tables. In brief, we recognize the fact that imagination is a divinely given faculty, not to be suppressed, but to be freely used. Why, then, should we think it strange that God should have used the same faculty in the education of the Hebrew race? If to-day it is one of his instruments for the development of humanity, why should we think it impossible that in the olden time he should have inspired men to use their imagination for the moral and spiritual culture of the race?

In truth, the works of imagination have a very high and a very varied service to perform. Fiction is, in the first place, entertaining and gives rest. The little child, left alone at night by the mother, whispers softly to itself a story and so talks itself to sleep; when we have lost the imagination of our childhood, we ask some genius who still retains it to tell us his story, that he may sweep out of our minds for a little while the cares and perplexities of our busy day, that in his narrative we may find rest and refreshment. Fiction is sometimes a valuable vehicle for the conveyance of instruction. It is true that there are critics who say that a work of imagination never should be didactic; but who would banish from literature Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress," or "Oliver Twist," or "Put Yourself in His Place" because they are didactic? Some of the greatest of our novelists have written for the purpose of illustrating truth, moral, religious, or

sociological. Fiction is descriptive and interpretative. The imagination tells us much of life with which otherwise we should be unfamiliar. If we desire pictures of old-time life we shall find them more vivid in "Henry Esmond," "Lorna Doone," or "Quentin Durward," than in Green's "History of England;" because the novelist has a free hand with which to picture the life that he desires to set before us. If we desire to know how the other half of the world lives, we shall find it more vividly portrayed in such a novel as Walter Besant's "All Sorts and Conditions of Men" than in such a statistical work as Charles Booth's "Labor and the Poor in London." Fiction is interpretative of life as well as descriptive of it. The great novelist understands the principles of human nature and portrays them — not philosophically, not psychologically, but dramatically; so that by sharing his imagination we share his understanding. If he be really a great dramatist, he realizes not only the outer life, but the moral forces which are at work in the world, and he so portrays life that those moral forces appear before us; he does not so much give instruction as impart life through the ministry of life. It would be a mistake to say that Shakespeare wrote "Macbeth" to show the evils of ambition, or "Othello" to show the evils of jealousy, or "Hamlet" to show the evils of irresolution; but, none the less, the great interpreter of human life could not tell the story of jealousy, of ambition, or of irresolution without making us feel,

rather than see, their evil. Thus fiction not only entertains, instructs, describes, interprets, but inspires; by showing noble life, it quickens noble life in us; by showing ignoble life, it inspires us with hate against what is ignoble.

Fiction in the Old Testament serves all these purposes. Some of these Hebrew stories are vastly entertaining. If one doubts it, let him read the Old Testament story of Daniel or Samson or Elijah to a group of children; he will find them not less interested than they would be in any story to be found in Greek or Roman literature. Some of these Hebrew stories are didactic, written for the purpose of conveying moral instruction; the parables of Christ are prëeminently so. Some of them are simply descriptive. We get, for instance, from the account of Eliezer's courtship of Rebecca for his master's son [1] a better picture of the way in which courtships were conducted in patriarchal times than we could possibly get from accurate history. We find in these stories, also, interpretations of life; love and jealousy, joy and sorrow, courage and cowardice, virtue struggling with vice and vanquishing it, vice struggling with virtue and vanquishing it, all this we find portrayed with moral simplicity nowhere surpassed, with dramatic power never degenerating into the melodramatic. In them all, with the entertainment, the didactic teaching, the description of external life, the portrayal of character, we find life

[1] Gen. chap. xxiv.

imparted through life ; and therefore in them all we can discover that inspiration which is more than instruction. It is a mistake to think, as men of the Puritan temperament have sometimes seemed to think, that all life comes through the intellect, and that we must understand before we can receive. A great deal comes through the sympathies, the emotions, the imagination, and through these the writer of fiction often addresses himself to us more effectively than either the historian, the philosopher, or the moralist.

A single illustration taken from the Book of Judges will serve to demonstrate to the more conservative reader that there is some fiction in the Old Testament. It is the parable of the trees, and reads as follows : —

"The trees went forth on a time to anoint a king over them : and they said unto the olive-tree, Reign thou over us. But the olive-tree said unto them, Should I leave my fatness, wherewith by me they honor God and man, and go to be promoted over the trees? And the trees said to the fig-tree, Come thou, and reign over us. But the fig-tree said unto them, Should I forsake my sweetness, and my good fruit, and go to be promoted over the trees? Then said the trees unto the vine, Come thou, and reign over us. And the vine said unto them, Should I leave my wine, which cheereth God and man, and go to be promoted over the trees? Then said all the trees unto the bramble, Come thou, and reign over us. And the bramble said unto the trees, If in truth ye anoint me king over you, then come and put your trust in my shadow : and if not, let fire

come out of the bramble, and devour the cedars of Lebanon." [1]

No one will doubt that this is fiction. And yet it would be quite as possible for God to make a tree that could talk as an ass that could talk, or a big fish that could swallow a man and a man that could live three days and three nights in the belly of the big fish. There is no question of possible or impossible with God. Our question always must be, not what God *can* do, but what it is reasonable to believe that he *has done*. We believe that this parable of the trees is fiction, because it has the qualities of fiction, because it is more reasonable to suppose that the author invented the story to serve as the vehicle of a moral, than to suppose that God created talking trees and brought them together in a quasi-political convention for that purpose. This parable, therefore, not only illustrates the truth that there is fiction in the Old Testament, but it indicates the method by which we are to determine what is fiction and what is history.

All readers recognize that the parables in the Bible are fiction; many of them are less ready to recognize its folk-lore.[2] By folk-lore I mean the

[1] Judges ix. 8–15.

[2] Mrs. L. S. Houghton has recently published in the N. Y. *Evangelist* an admirable series of Studies in the Old Testament which, doubtless, will be republished in book form. Two of them are devoted to "Folk Lore in the Old Testament." Folk lore she defines as "the narrative of events passed along from lip to lip down through the ages." As illustrations of such stories, of which the inspired writers have made use, she specifies Joshua's

stories which mothers tell their children, and which pass from generation to generation, sometimes in later history printed, sometimes never reduced to print; all peoples have such folk-lore, and the Hebrew people had theirs. Such were some of the stories subsequently incorporated in the Book of Genesis; such some of the tales respecting Elisha; such, probably, the account of the boyhood exploits of King David; such, certainly, the story of Samson.

Samson lived in the colonial days of Israel, when there was no king, and every man did what was right in his own eyes. His birth was heralded by an angelic messenger; he was consecrated to the life of a Nazarite from his cradle by his mother; he drank no wine, ate no grapes, suffered the locks of his hair to go uncut, and in his youth gave token of that extraordinary strength which has since rendered his name proverbial.

We first meet this Hebrew unheroic hero on his way to Timnath. A Philistine maiden has captured his fancy by her beauty, and, despite the law, the protests of his parents, the mission to which he is called by God as deliverer of his people, to Timnath he will go. The Philistine maiden plays the coquette with him, cajoles him out of his secret, and tells to his Philistine guests the answer

staying of the sun and moon, the story of Samson, certain of the Elijah and Elisha stories, certain of the narratives in Genesis which the element of folk lore enters into and modifies, and many other of the Biblical narratives.

to the riddle which he has proposed. To pay his wager of thirty changes of raiment he goes alone across the country and takes the raiment from a Philistine city; but his pride is wounded by the deceit which has been practiced upon him, and when the Philistine coquette marries one of the guests who had come to his betrothal, he catches three hundred jackals,[1] ties them together two by two by the tails, fastens a firebrand to each pair, and lets them loose in the harvest season to set fire to the Philistines' standing wheat. Then, when the Philistines, with singular injustice, visit their wrath on the bride and her father, putting her to death, Samson, with characteristic fickleness, smites them hip and thigh with a great slaughter. We next find him in the hands of more formidable foes. When the Philistines come up to avenge their wrongs on the nation which shelters Samson, and the Israelites deliver him

[1] "Many interpreters, reflecting that the solitary habits of the fox would make it very difficult to catch such a number, and that Samson's great strength would be of no avail in such an undertaking, suppose that the author meant jackals, which roam in packs, and could easily, it is said, be caught by the hundred. That the Hebrew name may have included jackals as well as foxes is quite possible; the Arabs are said in some places to confound the jackal with the fox, and in the modern Egyptian dialect the classical name of the fox is given exclusively to the jackal. The decision of the question is of importance only to those who take the story as a veracious account of an actual occurrence. They should consider, however, whether the author would thank them for their attempts to make Samson's wonderful performance easy." Judges: in the *International Critical Commentary*, by George Foot Moore, p. 341.

bound into their hands, he submits without opposition, only to break the cords which bind him, leap upon his would-be captors with a shout, and slay a thousand of them with his own hands, with no other weapon than the jaw-bone of an ass, and afterwards celebrates his exploit with a running couplet: —

> "With the jaw-bone of an ass,
> I assailed my assailants;
> With the jaw-bone of an ass,
> Have I slain a thousand men." [1]

Twenty years later we meet him in Gaza, a Philistine city, whither, still yielding himself a slave to his unbridled self-will and self-indulgent spirit, he has gone in pursuit of a Philistine woman. The Philistines close the gates and set a watch to catch him at the dawn. At midnight he goes out, takes the gates and posts upon his back and carries them off, in scornful disdain of their boasted strength. Such a man, weak in the conceit of his own strength, never learns life's lessons. He falls in with another Philistine woman, sets his heart upon her, and, with a folly for which there is no palliation, walks open-eyed into the trap the treacherous Delilah has set for him. She undertakes to get from him the secret of his superhuman strength. Three times he mocks her with lying answers; three times discovers her treachery, and, despite it all, at last

[1] Judges xv. 16. There is a play upon the Hebrew word which means both ass and heap that cannot be imitated in the English; as though he had said, "With the jaw-bone of an ass, asses on asses, have I slain a thousand men."

tells her the secret, lies down to sleep with his head upon her lap, to awake, his vow broken, his locks shaven, his strength gone, and himself an easy prey to his enemies. In servitude he learns that lesson of self-denial which he would learn nowhere else, grinds away in the prison-house of his foes, little by little gathers his strength, and in one last barbaric yet heroic effort brings down the temple of the Philistines' god, Dagon, upon himself and upon the worshipers assembled to exult over him.

This story, found anywhere but in Hebrew literature, we should assume to be that half-fiction, half-history of which such stories in primitive literature are always composed; not only we should, we do assume it to be such; for the story of Samson in Hebrew literature and the story of Hercules in Greek literature remarkably parallel each other.[1] To the same Semitic origin both names are traced by linguists. Both are men of extraordinary strength; of both specifically the same traditions are told; both slay a lion with their own hands; both suffer death, though in different ways, at the hands of their treacherous wives. One, a captive in Philistia, summoned to make sport for his enemies, pulls down the Temple of Dagon, and buries himself and the Philistines under its ruins; the other, a captive in Egypt, led forth to be sacrificed to Jupiter, breaks the bands which bind him, and

[1] See the parallel traced in detail by Professor George F. Moore in his commentary on Judges, *The International Critical Commentary*, pp. 364, 365.

slays the priests and scatters the assemblage. Even the custom of tying a lighted torch between two foxes in the circus, in memory of the damage once done the harvest-fields, was long kept up in Greece — a singular witness to the extent of this athlete's reputation. The modern or literary critic of the Bible, whose point of view is that given in the first article of this series, sees no reason for thinking that the same substantial stories are fiction when found in Greek literature and history when found in Hebrew literature. The value of the stories does not depend upon their historical *vraisemblance;* their value is in their ethical significance. The lesson of the life is plain: muscular strength mated to moral weakness never makes a hero; the man who lacks self-control can never be the deliverer or the true leader of a people.

CHAPTER VIII

SOME HEBREW STORIES RETOLD

THAT fiction was deliberately used for didactic purposes in the parable by the Hebrew is doubted by none; there is no reason to doubt that it was half consciously used by story-tellers in folk-lore; and if we judge of Hebrew literature by the ordinary literary standards, it is equally clear that it was sometimes artistically used by skillful story-tellers for the entertainment and inspiration of their readers. Two notable illustrations of such use are afforded, one by an Idyl of the Common People, and the other by a Historical Romance. The first,[1] although it describes scenes taking place prior to the organization of Israel as a kingdom, was almost certainly written after the return from the exile.

In their captivity the children of Israel had learned to hate the heathen with hatred so strong that it finds expression in the phrase, "Happy is he that shall take thy little ones and dash them against the stones."[2] With this not unnatural

[1] The place of Ruth in the Biblical genealogies (Ruth iv. 22; Matt. i. 5) indicates very clearly that there is an historical background for this story, as its structure indicates very clearly that it is in its spirit and form a work of fiction.

[2] Psalm cxxxvii. 9.

spirit in their hearts they return to the holy land; in the period of their colonization a new patriotism is born, — narrow, intense, bigoted, yet genuine. The laws against any fellowship with foreigners are revised, if indeed they are not now first enacted; especially marriage with foreigners is condemned by the priests with great vehemence.[1] Then it is that some unknown dramatist writes the story of Ruth.[2]

A Jew and his wife, driven by famine from Judea, seek refuge in Moab, a heathen country.

[1] Ezra ix. 11, 12; x. 10–17; Neh. xiii. 23–27.

[2] I accept, partly for the reasons implied in the above passage, a post-exilic date for the Book of Ruth, though the date is confessedly uncertain; Dr. Driver places it prior to the exile. *Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament*, p. 455.

Dr. W. Robertson Smith's argument appears to me weighty if not conclusive in favor of the later date: "If the book had been known at the time when the history from Judges to Kings was edited, it could hardly have been excluded from the collection; the ancestry of David was of greater interest than that of Saul, which is given in 1 Sam. ix. 1, whereas the old history named no ancestor of David beyond his father Jesse. In truth the book of Ruth does not offer itself as a document written soon after the period to which it refers; it presents itself as dealing with times far back (Ruth i. 1), and takes obvious delight in depicting details of antique life and obsolete usages; it views the rude and stormy period before the institution of the kingship through the softening atmosphere of time, which imparts to the scene a gentle sweetness very different from the harsher color of the old narratives of the book of Judges. In the language, too, there is a good deal that makes for and nothing that makes against a date subsequent to the captivity, and the very designation of a period of Hebrew history as 'the days of the Judges' is based on the Deuteronomistic additions to the book of Judges (ii. 16 *sq.*) and does not occur till the period of the exile." *Encyclopædia Britannica*, article Ruth.

Two sons are born to them, and two daughters-in-law come into the home. Then the husband dies, the sons die, and the widow and her two daughters-in-law, both Moabites, are left. In her poverty Naomi's thoughts return to the land of her fathers, and she resolves to return thither. The daughters start to go back with her. She pleads with them to leave her. "Can I furnish you husbands?" she says. "I am too old. And were I to marry and to have sons, you could not tarry till they grew. Go back, and leave me to my wretchedness." One yields. The other, in an ever-memorable address, insists on casting in her lot with her mother-in-law: "Whither thou goest, I will go; where thou lodgest, I will lodge; thy people shall be my people, and thy God shall be my God."[1]

So they come, mother and daughter-in-law, in want and wretchedness, to the land from which the mother had gone forth some years before. It is the time of the barley harvest. An ancient Jewish law provides that when men are reaping in their fields they shall leave the chance wheat which falls for the poor to glean.[2] This is not, it appears, a dead letter; and Ruth goes out into the barley harvest-field to glean for herself and her mother. She happens to light upon the field of Boaz, and begins gleaning, having first asked permission, which is granted her. Boaz seems to me to have

[1] Ruth i. 16.

[2] Deut. xxiv. 19–22; probably a local custom before it was framed into a law. See chapter on The Book of the Covenant.

fallen in love with this young widow at first sight, for when he sees her he distinguishes her from all the gleaners in the field, and asks the reapers who she is. Then he summons her, and says to her: "Glean on, and if you are thirsty, drink out of the same water-jar as the young men; and when we sit down to our noon meal, sit with us and dip your morsel of bread in our sour wine." So our dramatist depicts the Moabitess eating and drinking with the pious Jews. He is too wise and too artistic to point the moral, but as the Jew reads the story his prejudices begin to disappear. After the noon meal Boaz tells the young men not to reap very carefully. "Be careless," he says, "and drop handfuls of barley in your reaping on purpose for her."

One can easily see the picture so vividly put before us: these young men reaping, the young widow following after and looking with great wondering eyes at their careless ways in leaving such handfuls of barley for her to gather, and perhaps wondering if they are in love with her, that they are so providing for her; and Boaz meanwhile looking out of the corners of his eyes, glad in her gladness. I wonder whether, when they were married, if he ever told her how it happened? She goes back to her mother, and tells the story of her adventure. She has lost all hope of a new husband in leaving the land of Moab and coming to Israel, for what Israelite would marry a Moabite? But a mother's cunning is more than a match for

either legal provisions or race prejudices. She contrives how a good match shall be made for this daughter of hers. "Go back," she says, "my daughter, and when night has come, and the harvesters lie down to their sleep upon the harvest floor, lie down, too, at the feet of Boaz."

One thing that makes me think that he fell in love with her at first sight is that already he had sent out into the village to find out who she was, and had learned from her neighbors that she was a virtuous woman. But love is always timid; and though he is rich, he is, unhappily, too old, and has, so he thinks, no chance with this fair young widow. But when he wakes, and finds her at his feet, and asks, "Who is this?" and learns, instantly it flashes upon him that there is some one else in love beside himself, and he turns to her with "Bless thee, my daughter, that thou hast not fallen in love with a young man, rich or poor." You easily fill up the rest of the sentence; you know with whom she has fallen in love. It is quaint courtship of the ancient time; a charming love story, much better told in the old book than told here. I hope this telling will send the reader to the original. Land that once belonged to Elimelech, Naomi's husband, has been sold. He who marries Elimelech's daughter, it would appear, has a right to redeem the land, probably by repaying to the owner the purchase money.[1] We really know more about this law from the story of Ruth

[1] Deut. xxv. 7-9.

than from any other quarter; but apparently before he can legitimately marry her and redeem the land he must offer the privilege to a nearer kinsman. They meet with the elders at the gate, an informal local court. Boaz proposes to the nearer kinsman that he shall redeem the land; the kinsman says, "I will." But Boaz says, "If you redeem the land, you must take Ruth." "Oh, then," he says, "I won't." So Boaz both redeems the land and takes Ruth. And so the marriage is celebrated.

And is that all? Yes, that is all. Just a simple, beautiful, idyllic love story of the olden time.[1] I hardly know whether to try to play the part of Greek chorus lest I spoil the story by pointing out the moral — the strong, uninterpreted witness against race prejudice; the deep fidelity of a woman's heart to a sorrowing companion; the spiritual appreciation of a higher and better religion than that of the Moabite country from which she came; the simple peasant life on the fields of Beth-

[1] "An old family tradition, religiously kept because of the fame of the house it belonged to, told and retold for many generations, and only crystallized and written down at last after many centuries; there is in brief the origin of the Book of Ruth, now newly pictured and set forth for our later day. Whatever the date when it was actually written, it still preserved, evidently, all its original charm and oral naturalness and simplicity in taking on a literary form. And still it keeps for us this freshness, in every sympathetic detail, every touch of emotion, and moves us, after all these centuries, like some affecting thing of yesterday, — a true tale truly and beautifully told." *The Book of Ruth*, Introduction by Ernest Rhys, p. i.

lehem; and, best of all, the love of one faithful man to one faithful woman. We look back along those intervening centuries and bless God that man's love for woman and woman's love for man is as old as humanity and as immortal as God.

The fourth type of fiction in the Bible is Historical Romance, — the story of Queen Esther, a drama in four acts: the scene is laid in Shushan, the Persian capital, in the time of the exile.[1]

In the first act we see Xerxes, misnamed the Great, upon his throne, — a small-minded, self-willed, capricious, sensual Oriental despot; the Xerxes who in his campaign against Greece beheaded the engineers who built his bridge of boats across the Hellespont because the bridge was destroyed by a storm, and then ordered the sea to be scourged; the Xerxes who, when his friend Pythias had given five sons to the army, and asked that the eldest might be suffered to remain at home, killed the son and cut the body in two, that the army

[1] "The Hebrew Ahasuerus (or Akhashverosh) is the exact correspondent of the Persian *Khshayarsha*, which the Greeks and Romans rendered by Xerxes. The writer assumes that more than one Ahasuerus is known to his readers, and seeks to make it clear to them which Ahasuerus he is speaking of. First, he notes that the subject of his narrative is a real king, and, therefore, not the Ahasuerus of Daniel (ix. 1); secondly, that he ruled 'from India to Ethiopia' and, therefore, belonged to the later portion of the Persian series, since it was well known that the earlier Persian monarchs were not masters of India. He thus sets aside the Ahasuerus of Ezra iv. 6 (Cambyses), and points with sufficient clearness to Xerxes, the son of Darius Hystaspis." *The Bible Commentary*, Esther, p. 475.

might pass between the two parts; the Xerxes who, with the first disaster that came to his army, fled, like the coward that he was, back to his empire again, leaving Mardonius to extricate it from the toils into which his own folly had led it; the Xerxes who, leaving the affairs of state in stronger hands, offered a premium to any man who would discover a new form of pleasure, and gave himself up to weeks of feasting and revelry. This Xerxes, in one of his drunken orgies, calls on Vashti, his queen, to come into the presence of the court and exhibit her beauty to the courtiers. To ask a woman to come into such a presence at any time would be to insult her; to ask her to come unveiled into such a company in ancient Persia was to offer too gross an insult to be endured. With womanly courage, Vashti refuses to go. The king instantly deposes her; but, when the fumes of the orgy have passed away, awakes to regret his sudden action, and his courtiers awake to the necessity of finding some way of pacifying his anger, or it would turn against them. They propose to send out courtiers, gather all the beautiful women of his kingdom, select the handsomest, and put her in Vashti's place. The scheme approves itself to this voluptuous, self-willed, capricious monarch. A Jew, a Pharisee of the strictest sort, is an attendant in some capacity upon this court, and brings his niece, Hadassah or Esther, to compete for the dangerous honor. It seems strange that any guardian should offer his ward for a place in the harem of such a

king, but we must remember that honored women sought the hand of Henry VIII., though they took the place which he had made vacant by bloody decrees. Mordecai succeeds. Esther enters the king's harem and becomes his favorite. So the first act ends.

In the second act Haman appears upon the scene, — cold, shrewd, deliberate, cunning, the villain of the drama. He has climbed his way to the side of the throne, and all other courtiers bow and show him honor: all but one. In the universal adulation paid to Haman, Mordecai alone remains scornfully erect. Race animosity inflames the personal hostility between these two. The Jew despises the cunning but treacherous Amalekite; the Amalekite hates the rigorous virtue and inflexible pride of the Jew. It is the Cavalier against the Puritan; the Jesuit against the Huguenot. Haman awaits his time and nurses his wrath. Patience in passion is the very climax of wickedness. To such patience Haman attained. Nor is it enough for him to have personal revenge on his personal enemy. Hating the Jew with all the concentrated hate for an alien race, he resolves that the race shall pay the penalty for the slight that has been put upon him. The Jews were then, as now, a thrifty people. Haman calculates that their extermination and the confiscation of their estates would put into the royal treasury over ten million dollars. He proposes the scheme to Xerxes, is so confident of the result that he is willing to pay the sum in advance out of his

own coffers, and finds a readier acceptance of his offer from the king because the royal funds are exhausted by excessive luxury and dissipation. With the capriciousness of a despot, he takes from his finger the seal ring which serves as a signature and gives it to Haman. "Do with them," said he, "as it seemeth good unto thee." The decree is issued accordingly. It provides for the extermination of all the Jews within Xerxes's dominion, is posted in the palace, is sent out by courtiers to every province, and Haman and the king sit down to ratify it in a drinking bout. Mourning is not allowed in the palace. Letters are not delivered in the harem; newspapers do not exist. Esther knows not the peril that threatens her people until she sees sackcloth on Mordecai, and sends a messenger to bid him take it off. So communication is opened between the uncle and the niece. He sends her the news, and calls for her intervention. Perhaps she remembers what came upon Pythias when he offered remonstrance; perhaps she remembers that the engineers were beheaded because the storm broke their pontoon bridge. Sadly she recalls to herself the fact that she is no longer the king's favorite. "For thirty days I have not been invited to meet the king," she says; "and I can do nothing." Mordecai's reply, such as a Cromwell might have given to his daughter, interprets his strenuous character. "Think not with thyself that thou shalt escape in the king's house, more than all the Jews. For if thou altogether holdest thy peace

at this time, then shall there enlargement and deliverance arise to the Jews from another place; but thou and thy father's house shall be destroyed; and who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?" The niece yields to the strong influence of her adopted father. She resolves to make the effort, though with but little hope of its success. With dignity she says, "If I perish, I perish."[1] So the second act ends, with three days for prayer and fasting by her and her maidens, for her by the people of her race.

The third act opens in the king's apartment. The queen, understanding the king's weaknesses, has prepared a banquet of wine for him. She has attired herself with unusual care, making the most of her extraordinary beauty. Then she crosses the threshold of the harem, traverses the hall that separates it from the court of the king's house, pushes her way through the throng of surprised courtiers and attendants, and stands at the door of the throne-room, waiting; with what beating heart we may guess, the signal that should give life and hope to her nation or decree both death to it and to her. The moment is auspicious. The king holds out his sceptre in signal of favor. She draws near, touches it, and prefers her request. Will the king honor her with his presence at her banquet of wine, and will he bring his favorite minister Haman with him? The invitation is accepted. The king and the courtier sit down at the banquet of wine.

[1] Esther iv. 14, 16.

Pressed by the king to present her petition, she holds back her request for another day. "What wilt thou have," asks the king; "it is granted, and that before thou askest it." "Only this, my lord," she replies, "that you and Haman will come to a greater feast to-morrow; then I will tell you." His curiosity is piqued, his interest is aroused. Perhaps that was the reason why that night he could not sleep, and sent for some one to read him the court records to put him to sleep. What better nightcap, as Thackeray calls it, than court records could be devised? But in this case it fails of its purpose, for in these records the king finds it recorded how not long ago two men had devised to assassinate him, and one Mordecai had discovered the plot and saved his life. "What has been done for this Mordecai?" he asks the reader. "Nothing." "Well, something must be done." With that he falls to sleep. Meanwhile Haman, elated by the honor conferred upon him, goes home, envied by all his fellows save only Mordecai, who, erect as ever and meeting the fiery glance of hate that leaps from Haman's eyes with scorn invincible, adds fresh fuel to that hate. He cannot wait for the execution of the general decree; he will ask for Mordecai's execution to-morrow. Before he goes to his bed he gives orders for the erection of the gallows. So the third act ends, Haman preparing for the execution of Mordecai, the king planning how to honor him.

The fourth act opens the next morning with

Haman early at the palace. He is greeted as he enters with the king's question, "What shall the king do to him whom he delighteth to honor?" Haman thinks to himself, Who is it the king so delights to honor as myself? So he prescribes for himself what his vanity desires. "Put him on the king's horse, put the king's robe upon him, put the king's crown on his head, and let some great prince lead the horse through the streets, crying everywhere, 'Thus doth the king to him whom he delights to honor.'" "Well said, wise counselor," responds the king. "Who is so great a prince as yourself? Put Mordecai on my horse, and lead him through the streets, proclaiming to all the people as thou hast said." There is no room for objection, question, hesitation, or delay. With what bitter malice at his heart Haman fulfills this charge we are left to imagine. Then he goes home and tells his wife and friends. His obsequious followers drop away from him; even his wife warns him of impending disaster. While they are talking come the king's chamberlains to hasten Haman to the banquet which the queen has provided for him. Then all is not lost. Still he has a place in the royal favor, and to the queen's banquet he goes, encouraging his heart with this hope against hope.

So the last scene opens, with Haman, the king, and the queen at the banquet table together. Again the king repeats his question, "What is thy petition, Queen Esther, and it shall be granted

thee? and what is thy request, and it shall be performed, to half of the kingdom?" Then she flings herself at his feet, with all the pent-up anguish of her woman's heart: "My lord the king, let my life be given me at my petition, and my people at my request, for we are sold, I and my people, to be destroyed utterly." The king, who has forgotten his careless gift of the Jewish people, the ring, the seal, and the decree, responds, "Who has dared to do this?" Then with flashing eye she turns on Haman. "The adversary's name is this wicked Haman." And the king in his wrath rises and goes out; and Haman flings himself on her couch to implore her mercy; and the king coming back and looking on him there cries, "Will he insult the queen in my very presence!" and the courtiers, who had been obsequious to Haman in his power, come in rejoicing in his fall, to hasten his doom. "He has erected just outside the gate a gallows for Mordecai," says one of them. "Hang him thereon," replies the king. So they hang Haman on the gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai. One would think that a decree should have gone out for the protection of the Jews. Whether the narrator thought it more dramatic to give a different ending, or whether it was really true that a decree once issued could not be recalled, I will not attempt to determine; but, according to the story, a new decree is issued that the Jews may defend themselves against their enemies, and in the battles that ensued seventy-five

thousand of the enemies of the Jews are slain; and so the story ends.

One has, it seems to me, but to read this story to feel the life of a romance in it.[1] The contrasted characters — the sensual monarch, the unscrupulous minister, the proud Puritan, the brave woman, brave with true womanly courage — are drawn in few lines, but with marvelous skill. The plot, with its play of character against character, its rapidity of movement, its dramatic incident, its plotting and counter-plotting, shows the highest constructive skill; and the moral inspiration of the story, inciting to hate of the sensuality of Xerxes and the crafty malice of Haman, to admiration for the courage of Mordecai, and a love that is more than admiration for the womanly bearing of the queen, is all the greater because the narrator does not formulate it; and the story is all the more religious in its spirit because it is so wholly free from the phraseology of religion in its language.[2]

He who regards the Book of Esther as scientific history must explain as best he can how the

[1] This aspect of the book is recognized by commentators, who treat it rather as history than as fiction, *e. g.*, J. W. Haley: "Much of the fascination of the book is due to the skillful arrangement of parts. There is all the effect which we are accustomed to ascribe to the elaborate weaving of a plot in drama, or in a work of fiction, and we find a well devised dénouement. Every thread and fibre is wrought into its place in the fabric, and there is nothing irrelevant." *The Book of Esther.* A New Translation with Notes, etc., by John W. Haley, M. A.

[2] It is the only book in the Bible in which the name of God does not appear.

historian obtained his knowledge of the facts in the minute detail with which he records them. Who was present to hear the conference between Haman and Ahasuerus; the colloquy between the king and the queen in the first banquet; the conversation between Haman and his wife; the question of the king to the king's chamberlains; the conversation between Haman and the king; and the plea of Esther for the life of herself and her people?[1] It is very probable, indeed almost certain, that the story has an historical basis, but it is equally certain from the very structure of the narrative itself that the story has been told with the freedom of the romancer, who was using the material for literary and moral effect, not for a scientific purpose.

A fifth type of fiction, Satirical Romance, is afforded by the Book of Jonah. Of this book there are three interpretations: first, that it is history, and all the events took place exactly as narrated; secondly, that it is allegory, that Jonah represents the Jewish people, the fish the heathen lands, the capture of Jonah by the fish the captivity, the vomiting of Jonah out upon the land again the return from captivity; third, that it is a satirical romance, written for the purpose of satirizing the narrowness of the Jewish religion, and teaching the wideness of God's love.[2] This latter

[1] Est. iii. 8–11; v. 6–8, 14; vi. 3, 7–10; vii. 3–6.

[2] For the first or historical view, which is the more ancient and traditional, the student is referred to Dr. William Smith's *Bible Dictionary*, article Jonah, especially to the supplemental article

I believe to be the true interpretation, and the one which I assume to be true in telling and interpret-

by Dr. Calvin E. Stowe; to the Introduction to the Book of Jonah in the *Commentary on the Minor Prophets*, by Dr. E. B. Pusey; and to the Preface to the Book of Jonah in the *Commentary on the Minor Prophets*, by Dr. E. Henderson; and to a monograph in pamphlet, *Light on the Story of Jonah*, by Dr. Henry Clay Trumbull, 1894. This view, however, it must be recognized, has been questioned from the very earliest ages; thus Josephus prefaces and closes his account of the strange experiences of the prophet in a way clearly to indicate his doubt of its historicity: "I cannot," he says, "but think it necessary for me, who have promised to give an accurate account of our affairs, to describe the actions of this prophet so far as I have found them written down in the Hebrew books." *Antiquities of the Jews*, book ix., chapter x., § 2. For the second or parabolic view the reader is referred to *The Book of the Twelve Prophets*, by George Adam Smith, D. D. "Nor does this book," he says, "written so many centuries after Jonah had passed away, claim to be real history. On the contrary, it offers to us all the marks of the parable or allegory." After indicating what these marks are, he adds, "The purpose of the parable, and it is patent from first to last, is to illustrate the mission of prophecy to the Gentiles, God's care for them, and their susceptibility to his word. More correctly, it is to enforce all this truth upon a prejudiced and thrice reluctant mind. . . . The writer had in view, not a Jewish party but Israel as a whole in their national reluctance to fulfill their Divine mission to the world. . . . Of such a people Jonah is the type. Like them he flees from the duty God has laid upon him. Like them he is beyond his own land, cast for a set period into a living death, and like them rescued again only to exhibit once more upon his return an ill-will to believe that God had any fate for the heathen except destruction. According to this theory, then, Jonah's disappearance in the sea and the great fish, and his subsequent ejection upon dry land, symbolize the Exile of Israel and their restoration to Palestine." Pp. 498, 501, 502, 503. The third view, which regards the book as a romance, with a moral meaning, the view which differs in detail rather than in essence from the second, is thus stated by Ewald: "This much is apparent from the style and

ing the story here. Of the correctness of the interpretation the reader must form his own judgment on its bare presentation, without argument or defense.

In the outset, however, we are confronted by the claim that Jesus Christ has solved this question for us by his reference to the Book of Jonah. There are two accounts of this reference, one in Luke, one in Matthew. They are as follows: —

Matthew xii. 39, 40, 41.	Luke xi. 29, 30, 32.
But he answered and said unto them, An evil and adulter-	And when the people were gathered thick together, he be-

character of the little book which now perpetuates the prophet's name, from the failing end of the story, and (which is the most decisive thing) from the true meaning of the whole book, namely, that the author beheld in the legendary material which was ready to his hand simply a given medium for presenting in an attractive form a prophetic truth which lived in his own heart." He compares the story of the prophet's adventure to the stories in the Arabian Nights' Entertainments, a common form of Oriental fiction, and implies that it is analogous to them in its literary form, but differs from them in its moral significance. "The course of ancient Hebrew literature," he says, "is distinguished from that of the other ancient literatures, not as regards its form, but only as regards its subject-matter and its higher prophetic tendencies." *Commentary on the Prophets of the Old Testament*, by Dr. Georg H. A. von Ewald, vol. v. pp. 90, 92. Analogous to Dr. Ewald's interpretation is that of Dr. Caverno, who says: "Whoever wrote Jonah meant satire on the prophets as Lowell meant satire on the politicians of the day of the *Biglow Papers*, only the strokes in Jonah are of lighter touch than even those of Lowell." *A Narrow Ax in Biblical Criticism*, by Rev. Charles Caverno, A. M., LL. D., p. 82. For a careful study of the Book of Jonah, and a careful consideration of its various aspects, see *Jonah in Fact and Fancy*, by the Rev. Edgar James Banks, M. A., Ph. D.

ous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas: For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: because they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here.

gan to say, This is an evil generation: they seek a sign; and there shall no sign be given it, but the sign of Jonas the prophet. For as Jonas was a sign unto the Ninevites, so shall also the Son of man be to this generation. The men of Nineveh shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here.

The reference to Jonah as being three days and three nights in the fish's belly is given only by Matthew, not by Luke. There are two reasons why the modern critic does not regard this as evidence that the Book of Jonah is history. In the first place, even if Christ used the words reported by Matthew, such use does not indicate that the book is historical. If a modern speaker, addressing an American audience, were to say, "As Ulysses sailed between Scylla and Charybdis," this would not indicate that he believed the story of Scylla and Charybdis to be historical. Incidental reference to an ancient story does not indicate that the person who makes the reference vouches for its historical character. But, in the second place, the modern critic does not believe that Christ ever used the words, "As Jonah was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart

of the earth." He thinks that these words are interpolated in Matthew's account, and do not belong with the words that Christ is uttering. The Pharisees demanded a sign. Christ declares that they shall have no other sign than that of the prophet Jonah. Does he mean no other sign than the resurrection — that is, the greatest of all signs? No. What he means is, the people of Nineveh had no miracle, for there is nothing to indicate that they ever heard of Jonah's strange adventure; they repented at the mere preaching of Jonah, and Christ says that his generation has had the preaching of one greater than Jonah. Mr. Moulton, in his "Bible for English Readers," has indicated the true place of this phrase in Matthew, by putting it in his edition of the gospel in a footnote. The modern critic believes that this phrase was added by an early scribe, or possibly by Matthew himself, as his interpretation of Jesus' words; the reader must remember that in those days there was no way to add such an interpretation other than by incorporating it in the text. That this was not Jesus' meaning is further indicated by the fact that the parallel is not a true one. Jesus was not three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. He was buried on Friday; he rose from the tomb on Sunday: he was in the earth one day and two nights. Whether the story is history or fiction is not determined, therefore, by this reference to it in the Gospels. It is to be determined by the structure of the story itself. What is the story?

A prophet is called upon by God to preach to a pagan city. He refuses. He does not believe in the heathen; he does not care for the heathen; he does not think religion is intended for the heathen; he refuses to accept the commission. He attempts to fly from Jehovah by fleeing from the province of Palestine, over which alone, according to his narrow conception, Jehovah has jurisdiction; gets into a ship going to Tarshish, and as soon as the ship is fairly out to sea goes to bed and goes to sleep, thinking himself safe. But Jehovah is God of the sea as well as of the land; he sends out a great wind into the sea; the prophet is presently awakened and summoned to the deck, and there is called on to join with the worshipers of other gods in a prayer-meeting in which each one invokes his own god for protection. So he learns his first lesson, that those whom he thought pariahs and outcasts have also some faith in the divine. The storm continues; the sailors cast lots to ascertain who is culpable; the lot falls upon the prophet; he tells his tale and bids them cast him into the sea. This they are unwilling to do, and, ceasing their prayers to their various gods, they row hard to bring the boat to land, but all in vain. Thus he learns his second lesson: the heathen whom he thought pariahs and outcasts, for whom he cared nothing, are humane and care for him. At last they throw him overboard, yielding to his entreaty and compelled by the peril which threatens to engulf them all. The storm ceases, and a great fish which Jehovah

has prepared swallows up the prophet.[1] In the belly of the fish he proceeds to compose a poem, which, when we study it, we find is made up of reminiscences of an ancient psalm.[2] Then Jehovah speaks to the great fish, and the great fish hears and obeys and vomits the prophet out upon the dry land.

One would have thought that this would have been enough to take the narrowness out of the prophet, but it did not. It is difficult to get narrowness out of a narrow ecclesiastic. Jehovah again directs him to go to Nineveh, and he goes, though with unmistakable reluctance. So great is the city that it takes three days to walk from one gate to the other through the centre. He enters the city and begins his mission. He has gone but one day's journey, that is, one-third way through the city, when the whole people of the city accept the message, proclaim a fast, put on sackcloth from the greatest even to the least of them, and are commanded by the king to turn every one from his evil way in hope that God will repent and turn from the fierceness of his anger. So great a result from a single day's preaching was never heard of before or since in the history of the race. What is very curious, the history of Israel gives no record of any

[1] There is no reason to call it a whale; it is not called whale either in the Old or the New Testament; the word in the New Testament rendered whale simply means great fish. According to the narrative, Jehovah prepares a special fish to swallow him, and the fish does what it has been made to do.

[2] Psalm lxxxviii. 5–8.

such revival among the Ninevites, and the history of Nineveh contains no suggestion of it. God accepts the penitence of the city, repents him of the evil that he had said that he would do, and does it not, and the prophet is rejoiced? No! He is very angry; he expostulates. "Was not this," he says to Jehovah, "my saying when I was in my own country? That was the reason I fled beforehand into Tarshish, because I knew that thou art a God gracious and merciful, slow to anger and of great kindness, and repentest thou of the evil."[1] I knew — that is, this is the effect of his expostulation — that if I came here and preached, God would not do what I told them He would do, and I should be left in the position of a false prophet. So he goes out from the city, builds him a little hut, and sits down there to see what will happen. God prepares a gourd that serves him as a shield from the sun, and Jonah is glad because of the gourd. Then God prepares a worm to smite the gourd, and it withers, and God prepares a vehement east wind and a hot sun to beat upon the head of Jonah, and in his misery he wishes for death. Then God expostulates: "Dost thou well to be angry for the gourd?" and the sulky prophet replies, "I do well to be angry." Jehovah patiently continues his expostulations: "Thou hast had pity on the gourd, for the which thou hast not labored, and should not I have pity on Nineveh, wherein are more than six-score thousand persons that cannot discern between

[1] Jonah iv. 2.

their left hand and their right hand, and also much cattle?"[1] But he gets no answer. And so the story ends — Jonah left sulky and cross like a petulant child in the hot sun outside the walls of Nineveh, angry because God is merciful. The meaning of the story seems to me to be writ in large and luminous characters: "There is a wideness in God's mercy like the wideness of the sea." When, from that splendid truth, brought out more clearly in the story of Jonah than in any other book of the Old Testament, we turn aside to discuss the question whether a whale has a throat big enough for a man to pass through, we are abandoning the great lesson which God meant to teach through our imagination to debate a physiological fact of absolutely no consequence.

[1] Jonah iv. 9–11.

CHAPTER IX

A DRAMA OF LOVE[1]

LITERATURE is an interpretation of life. The interpreter may expound in a philosophical manner

[1] There are three conceptions of the Song of Songs; the first regards it as an allegory of the spiritual union between the soul and God or between Christ and his Church. This mystical view finds, perhaps, its best interpreter in Mme. Guyon. One or two quotations from her will serve to illustrate the spirit of this method of interpretation: "Chapter i. verse 1, '*Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth.*' This kiss, which the soul desires of its God, is essential union, or a real, permanent, and lasting possession of its divine object. It is the spiritual marriage." . . . "Verse 4, '*I am black but comely, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, as the tents of Kedar, as the curtains of Solomon.*' . . . What is this thy blackness, O thou incomparable maiden? (we say to her) tell us, we pray thee. *I am black*, she says, because I perceive by the light of my divine Sun, hosts of defects, of which I was never aware until now; I am black, because I am not yet cleansed from self. . . . Verse 7, '*I charge you, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, by the roes and by the hinds of the field, that ye stir not up, nor awake my love till she please.*' The soul is in a mystic slumber in this embrace of betrothal, in which she enjoys a sacred rest she had never before experienced. . . . The *daughters of Jerusalem* are loving and meddlesome souls, who are anxious to wake her, though under the most specious pretexts; but she is so soundly asleep that she cannot be aroused. . . . Verse 9, '*King Solomon made himself a chariot of the wood of Lebanon.*' The Son of God, the King of Glory, *made himself a chariot* of his Humanity, to which he became united in the Incarnation, intending to be seated upon it to all eternity, and to make of it a triumphal car, upon which he will

the laws of life, illustrating them more or less by pictures produced by his imagination or by inci-

ride with pomp and splendor in the sight of all his creatures." *The Song of Songs of Solomon, with Explanations and Reflections having Reference to the Interior Life*, by Madame Guyon, pp. 23, 33, 51, 66. — The second view regards the book as a collection of love songs exchanged between two lovers, Solomon and the Shulamite maiden; or even a collection of entirely independent songs, the only unity being their common theme, Love. It has even been suggested that the poem was written to celebrate the nuptials between Solomon and the daughter of Pharaoh. This, which is the traditional view, is adopted by Hengstenberg, Delitzsch, Keil, Kingsbury, and Professor Moulton. The English reader will most readily find it and the arguments in support of it in *The Bible Commentary*, and in the *Modern Reader's Bible*. In the latter this view is thus stated by Professor Moulton: "King Solomon with a courtly retinue, visiting the royal vineyards upon Mount Lebanon, comes by surprise upon the fair Shulamite. She flies from them. Solomon visits her in the disguise of a shepherd, and so wins her love. He then comes in all his royal state, and calls upon her to leave Lebanon and become his queen. They are in the act of being wedded in the royal palace when the poem opens. This, which is the story as a whole, is brought out for us in seven idyls, each independent, all founded on the one story, but making their reference to different parts of it as these occur to the minds of the speakers, without the limitation to order of succession that would be implied in dramatic presentation." *Modern Reader's Bible*, Biblical Idyls, Intro. p. xi. — The third view, the one adopted in this chapter, regards the book as a drama in which there are three principal characters: Solomon, the Shulamite maiden, and her shepherd lover. This view is thus summarized by Dr. Driver: "A beautiful Shulamite maiden, surprised by the king and his train on a royal progress in the north (vi. 11, 12), has been brought to the palace at Jerusalem (i. 4, etc.), where the king hopes to win her affections, and to induce her to exchange her rustic home for the honor and enjoyments which a court life could afford. She has, however, already pledged her heart to a young shepherd, and the admiration and blandishments which

dents from history or from other authors; he may portray life in action and accompany the portrayal with some description and interpretation; he may simply create the characters and place them in the situations which he has invented for them, and leave them to interpret themselves by their speech and their actions. The first form of literature is Essay, the second is Novel, the third is Drama. Emerson elucidates the nature of heroism thus: "Self-trust is the essence of heroism. It is the

the king lavishes upon her are powerless to make her forget him. In the end she is permitted to return to her mountain home, where, at the close of the poem, the lovers appear hand in hand (viii. 5), and express, in warm and glowing words, the superiority of genuine, spontaneous affection over that which may be purchased by wealth or rank (viii. 6, 7)." *An Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament*, 6th edition, by S. R. Driver, D. D., pp. 437, 438. I agree with Dr. Driver that an attentive study of the poem can leave little doubt that the modern view (*i. e.*, the dramatic) is decidedly more probable than the traditional view (*i. e.*, the lyrical). For the reasons which lead to this conclusion, except as they are apparent in the dramatic version of the Song here given, the reader is referred to Dr. Driver's *Introduction;* and for a fuller explanation of this dramatic rendering of the book he is recommended to consult *The Lily Among Thorns,* by William Elliot Griffis, D. D., to whom I gladly acknowledge my indebtedness in the preparation of this chapter. A special translation and dramatic arrangement can be found in the interesting monograph on the Song of Songs, by the Rev. William C. Daland (Leonardsville, N. Y.). They both follow the previous work along the same line by Ewald, whose analysis of the poem is given by Driver in his *Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament.* It may be added that the date and authorship of the Song of Songs are both uncertain; it is quite clear that Solomon is not the author; "The Song of Solomon" must be taken to mean a Song about Solomon, not a song by him.

state of the soul at war, and its ultimate objects are the last defiance of falsehood and wrong, and the power to bear all that can be inflicted by evil agents."[1] Thackeray, in "The Newcomes," gives us no definition of heroism, but in Colonel Newcome he paints the picture of a hero. We see, however, not only the portrait, but the artist at his work painting it. We know what he thinks of his sitter, for he tells us very frankly: "With that fidelity which was an instinct of his nature, this brave man thought ever of his absent child and longed after him. He never forsook the native servants and nurses who had charge of the child, but endowed them with money sufficient (and little was wanted by the people of that frugal race) to make all their future lives comfortable. No friends went to Europe, no ship departed, but Newcome sent presents and remembrances to the boy and thanks to all who were kind to his son."[2] Here the hero is seen, but seen through the eyes of the artist who is painting his hero's portrait. In "Clive" Browning portrays a hero, but says no word of eulogy or criticism. He simply bids you look and see Clive's deed; summons you, as a bystander might, to the door of the club-room to see the scene: —

"Twice the muzzle touched my forehead. Heavy barrel, flurried wrist,

[1] *Essays*, by Ralph Waldo Emerson, Heroism.

[2] *The Newcomes*, chap. v.

Either spoils a steady lifting. Thrice: then, 'Laugh at Hell who list,
I can't! God 's no fable either. Did this boy's eye wink once? No!
There 's no standing him and Hell and God, all three against me — so
I did cheat!'
And down he threw the pistol."[1]

In the Essay the principle is elucidated; in the Novel it is illustrated; in the Drama it is simply portrayed. In the Essay the author interprets; in the Novel he portrays and interprets; in the Drama his portrayal is left to be self-interpretative. This self-interpretative nature of the drama is one of the characteristics which fit it for presentation on the stage, but by no means the only one. The drama may be a story so constructed that it can be told "by actual representation of persons by persons, with imitation of language, voice, gesture, dress, and accessories or surrounding conditions;"[2] but this is by no means essential. Browning's "Ring and the Book," which could by no possibility be acted on the stage, is as truly a drama as is "Hamlet" or "Faust." The real distinction between the dramatic and the epic poem is well defined by Boucicault: "In the epic poem there is only one speaker — the poet himself. The action is bygone. The scene is described. The persons are spoken of as third persons. There are only

[1] *Dramatic Idylls*, "Clive," Browning's Works, Riverside Edition, vol. vi. p. 160.

[2] *Century Dictionary*.

two concerned in it, the poet and the reader. In the drama the action is present, the scene is visible, the persons are speakers, the sentiments and passions are theirs."[1]

It is in this sense that the "Song of Songs" is a drama. It is a portrayal of woman's love resisting the enticements of ambition. In it there are three characters: a Shulamite[2] maiden; her peasant lover, to whom she is betrothed, and to whose love she remains faithful under strong temptations to abandon him for a supreme place at the court of King Solomon, as the head of his harem; and Solomon himself. There is also a chorus of women attached to the court, who lend their influences in coöperation with the endeavors of the king to win the maiden from her betrothed. No moral is drawn; no characterizations are furnished; no interpretation is afforded; the poet is unseen; an invisible artist summons us to look on while the royal lover endeavors by every blandishment to win the peasant girl; we are invited to listen to her replies, to witness even her night-dreams, and to see at last the victory which her love, never for a moment vacillating, wins for her and for woman. In studying this book there are three considerations which must be constantly in the mind of the student.

I. This is a drama only in the largest sense of that word: it was not probably composed to be

[1] Quoted in *Century Dictionary* under Drama.

[2] Chap. vi. 13; a form of *Shunammite*, a native of Shunem (Shulem).

enacted on a stage, and is not adapted for that purpose, though it might lend itself to performance as a musical interlude, with the simplest scenic effects, or with none at all. There are clearly different songs to be sung by different singers, some male, some female; but these songs are not assigned by the author to their respective characters. Except King Solomon, no personage is named. There are no stage directions; and except in the account of Solomon's entrance into Jerusalem no scenic descriptions. There is no conversation; nothing that can properly be called a dialogue.[1] The interplay of thought and emotion is effected by the contrast between monologues. The Song of Songs is indeed rather a cycle of dramatic love songs than a drama in the modern sense of the word. It resembles an oratorio rather than an opera, though it cannot properly be said to resemble either; except that, as in the oratorio, the scenery, the occasion, the distinctive character of the three principal personages are all left to the imagination of the auditor. It is for this reason the commentators have differed so widely in their interpretation: that some have conceived that there are but two characters, others that there are three; that some sup-

[1] The dramatic critics generally introduce a dialogue element in chap. i., where they represent the Shulamite's song, depreciating her beauty, as interpreted by the chorus with the words "but comely," and in chap. iii., which they conceive to be a dialogue between different citizens commenting on the splendor of the royal procession. This appears to me too modern and artificial to be a probable interpretation of the design of the author.

pose the description of Solomon in Jerusalem[1] to be furnished dramatically by a trio representing different citizens, others regard it as a piece of description furnished by the poet himself and to be interpreted either by a kind of Greek chorus, or in recitative by an interpreter; that some regard the duet in chapter iv. 8–v. 1 as representing an ideal, others as representing a real, interview between the Shulamite and her peasant lover; that in some instances the same song is attributed to different characters by different interpreters. In the interpretation of the Song of Songs given in this chapter I follow the dramatic interpreter; but the reader must remember that it is impossible to give such an interpretation without modernizing and occidentalizing an ancient and Oriental song-cycle, and that in such an interpretation much necessarily depends upon the temper of the interpreter.[2]

II. The reader must also constantly bear in mind the difference between the language of imagination and the language of symbolism. The language of imagination is framed for the purpose

[1] Song of Songs, iii. 6–11.

[2] "In case some surprise should be felt at the amount which (upon either view) has, as it were, to be read between the lines, it may be pointed out that, if the poem is to be made intelligible, its different parts *must*, in one way or another, be assigned to different characters; and as no names mark the beginning of the several speeches, these must be *supplied*, upon the basis of such clues as the poem contains, by the commentator." *Driver's Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament*, sixth ed., p. 438.

of calling up in the mind of the auditor or reader some image. It ought always to be possible to translate the figure of speech into a figure on canvas. It is intended to be a picture, and it is imperfect if it cannot be translated into a picture. But the language of symbolism is not intended to call up in the mind of the auditor or reader a picture; it cannot be translated into a figure on canvas; it is not, and is not intended to be, pictorial. It uses things to represent ideas, much as in the earliest hieroglyphic writing things were used to represent ideas. When, for example, the Hebrew poet says God is a rock, he does not mean to call up in the mind of the reader the picture of a rock and compare God therewith; he means to call up the idea of strength and stability; he uses a concrete thing to represent an abstract idea. The language of these love songs is not the language of imagination, and they are not only despoiled of their meaning, but in some instances a grotesque meaning is imported into them, by reading them as though they were imaginative. They are symbolical. Thus when the maiden sings of her lover, "His aspect is like Lebanon, excellent as the cedars," she does not mean to call up an image of the mountain or the trees; she means to call up the ideas of strength and beauty which they represent, and the emotions which they evoke: the sight of him would be exhilarating to her as would be the view of her beloved cedar-clad mountains in her rural home. So when Solomon, praising the maiden,

sings to her, "Thy neck is like a tower of David builded for an armoury," he does not intend to call up an image of that tower, and trace a parallel between the two; he intends to call up the emotions which are aroused by the beauty and perfection of the finest piece of architecture in the city, and affirm that like emotions are evoked by the beauty and perfection of the maiden's neck and shoulders. Such symbolical use of language is not as common with us as it was with the ancient Hebrews, yet it is not uncommon. When we say of a person, "He has a sunny disposition," we do not wish to call up a reminiscence of the sunshine; we use the sunshine as a symbol, because the disposition we desire to describe produces on our spirits an effect something analogous to that produced by sunshine breaking through a cold, lowering, and gloomy day. The reader must resolutely get rid of the idea that the language of these love songs is the language of imagination. He must get from the symbol the idea or emotion it is calculated to produce and translate it into that idea or emotion.

III. The reader must remember also, in reading this cycle of dramatic love songs, that they are dramatic not didactic. The object of the essayist is to teach a lesson, the object of the dramatist is to produce an impression. The reader is not to look in this drama for a lesson taught; he is to be receptive to the impression intended to be produced. That impression is the spontaneity and the fidelity

of love. It is expressed in the refrain "Stir not up nor awaken love until it please," and in the closing song; "If a man would give all the substance of his house for love, he would utterly be contemned." The reader must remember, too, that the dramatist describes life as he sees it, not as a moralist might idealize it; that this dramatist is an Oriental and is writing for Oriental readers; and that in the Orient love is warmer and more passionate, and its expression is both cruder and more unreserved, than in the modern life of the West. In short, the reader must remember that the Song of Songs is not a sermon but a drama; that in it the author, an Oriental, uses Oriental symbolism, in portraying Oriental life, for the purpose of producing an impression of the purity and the strength of woman's love.

Bearing these considerations in mind let the reader turn to the Song of Songs itself, as it is here interpreted in a series of dramatic love songs, with occasional chorus.[1] The scene opens in Northern Palestine, whither Solomon, with his court and his harem, has come upon a summer excursion. The listener to the love songs which follow must imagine for himself the scene: the royal encampment, the white tents set out upon the plain, the

[1] In this interpretative rendering of this cycle of dramatic love songs, I follow the Revised Version, sometimes adopting the marginal reading, and in one or two instances varying the translation on the authority of eminent scholars, to make the meaning clearer.

royal tent in the centre, the military bands, the court officers, the ladies of the harem in their gorgeous apparel. In the midst of them is a sun-burned peasant girl, with that fresh beauty which appears all the more striking in contrast with the formal and artificial and somewhat worn beauties of the women who make up the Oriental court. The women of the harem in solos and chorus glorify the king; the Shulamite maiden depreciates her beauty, which is her peril, yet cannot resist the temptation coyly to qualify her self-depreciation.

CHORUS WITH SOLOS: COURT WOMEN AND THE SHULAMITE.[1]

Chorus. "Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth;
For thy love is better than wine.
Thine ointments have a goodly fragrance;
Thy name is as ointment poured forth;
Therefore do the maidens love thee.
Draw me; we will run after thee:
The king hath brought me into his chambers:
We will be glad and rejoice in thee,
We will make mention of thy love more than of wine:
Rightly do they love thee.

Shulamite. "I am black — but comely —
O ye daughters of Jerusalem,
As the tents of Kedar,
As the curtains of Solomon.
Look not upon me, because I am swarthy,
Because the sun hath scorched me.
My mother's sons were incensed against me,
They made me keeper of the vineyards;
But mine own vineyard have I not kept."

[1] Chap. i. 2–8.

Then she turns from the women of the court and addresses herself, in imagination, to her absent lover.

"Tell me, O thou whom my soul loveth,
Where thou feedest thy flock, where thou makest it to rest at noon:
For why should I be as one that wandereth
Beside the flocks of thy companions?
Chorus (*satirically*). "If thou know not, O thou fairest among women,
Go thy way forth by the footsteps of the flock,
And feed thy kids beside the shepherds' tents."

Solomon enters and prefers his suit in person. Then follows a duet between the two: he promises her jewels, she longs for her lover; he flatters her beauty, she recalls her peasant home; he promises her a dwelling-place in a palace of cedar, she replies that she is but a lily of the valley; he answers that such a lily in such peasant and poor surroundings is as a lily among thorns, she responds with reminiscences of the simple joys of her village life and her village lover.

DUO: SOLOMON AND THE SHULAMITE.[1]

Solomon. "I have compared thee, O my love,
To a steed in Pharaoh's chariots.
Thy cheeks are comely with plaits of hair,
Thy neck with strings of jewels.
We will make thee plaits of gold
With studs of silver.
Shulamite. "While the king sat at his table,
My spikenard sent forth its fragrance.
My beloved is unto me as a bundle of myrrh,
That lieth betwixt my breasts.
My beloved is unto me as a cluster of henna-flowers
In the vineyards of En-gedi.

[1] Chap. i. 9–ii. 7.

Solomon. "Behold, thou art fair, my love; behold, thou art fair;
Thou hast doves' eyes.
Shulamite (*recalling her lover*). "Behold, thou art fair, my beloved, yea pleasant:
Also our couch is green.
Solomon. "The beams of our house are cedars,
And our rafters are firs.
Shulamite. "I am a rose of Sharon,
A lily of the valleys.
Solomon. "As a lily among thorns,
So is my love among the daughters.
Shulamite. "As the apple-tree among the trees of the wood,
So is my beloved among the sons.
I sat down under his shadow with great delight,
And his fruit was sweet to my taste.
He brought me to the banqueting house,
And his banner over me was love.
Stay ye me with cakes of raisins, comfort me with apples:
For I am sick with love.
Let his left hand be under my head,
And his right hand embrace me.
I adjure you, O daughters of Jerusalem,
By the roes, and by the hinds of the field,
That ye stir not up, nor awaken love,
Until it please."

Love is spontaneous; love springs up of itself. Jewels cannot buy it, gold cannot purchase it, ambition cannot arouse it, courtly offers cannot win it. "I adjure you that you try not to stir or awaken love." It springs spontaneously or not at all. Then follows a reminiscent song, in which the Shulamite, as in a day-dream, sees her lover coming to her, and hears his love song at her latticed window, and imagines herself replying to him with a familiar verse from their shepherd life: "Take us the foxes, the little foxes."

DUO: THE SHULAMITE AND THE PEASANT LOVER.[1]

Shulamite. "The voice of my beloved! behold, he cometh,
Leaping upon the mountains, skipping upon the hills.
My beloved is like a roe or a young hart:
Behold, he standeth behind our wall,
He looketh in at the windows,
He sheweth himself through the lattice.
My beloved spake, and said unto me:

Lover's Song. "Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away.
For, lo, the winter is past,
The rain is over and gone;
The flowers appear on the earth;
The time of the singing of birds is come,
And the voice of the turtle is heard in our land;
The fig-tree ripeneth her green figs,
And the vines are in blossom,
They give forth their fragrance.
Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away.
O my dove, that art in the clefts of the rock, in the covert of the steep place,
Let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice;
For sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely.

Shulamite's Song. "Take us the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the vineyards;
For our vineyards are in blossom.
My beloved is mine, and I am his:
He feedeth his flock among the lilies.
When the day breaks, and the shadows flee away,
Turn, my beloved, and be thou like a roe or a young hart,
Upon the mountains which separate us."[2]

[1] Chap. ii. 8–17.

[2] The verse is a reminiscence of a vinedresser's song; and it intimates that her duties in the vineyard prevent her from immediately joining him. She imagines herself separated from his vineyard by some intervening hills, and begs him at the early dawn to climb over the mountains which separate them and come to her. All is in the realm of imagination.

The scene changes. The King has returned from Northern Palestine to Jerusalem, bringing the Shulamite maiden with him. He hopes that separation from her lover will cause her to forget her love. But in vain; in her sleep she dreams of her lover; dreams that she sought him in the city, found him, and brought him to her mother's house. The song of her dream ends with the distich we have already heard, "Stir not up, nor awaken love, until it please."

SOLO: THE SHULAMITE.[1]

The Shulamite's Dream. "By night on my bed I sought him whom my soul loveth:
I sought him, but I found him not.
I said, I will rise now, and go about the city,
In the streets and in the broad ways,
I will seek him whom my soul loveth:
I sought him, but I found him not.
The watchmen that go about the city found me:
To whom I said, Saw ye him whom my soul loveth?
It was but a little that I passed from them,
When I found him whom my soul loveth:
I held him, and would not let him go,
Until I had brought him into my mother's house,
And into the chamber of her that conceived me.
I adjure you, O daughters of Jerusalem,
By the roes, and by the hinds of the field,
That ye stir not up, nor awaken love,
Until it please."

To enhance the dramatic effect of the next scene, in which the King's appeal to the ambition of the Shulamite maiden is presented with all the elo-

[1] Chap. iii. 1–5.

quence of which the royal suitor is capable, the poet acts the part of Greek Chorus and describes the King and the military procession which accompanies him in the streets of the capital.

SOLO OR CHORUS.[1]

Interpreter. "Who is this that cometh up out of the wilderness
like pillars of smoke,
Perfumed with myrrh and frankincense,
With all powders of the merchant?
Behold, it is the litter of Solomon;
Threescore mighty men are about it,
Of the mighty men of Israel.
They all handle the sword, and are expert in war:
Every man hath his sword upon his thigh,
Because of fear in the night.
King Solomon made himself a palanquin
Of the wood of Lebanon.
He made the pillars thereof of silver,
The bottom thereof of gold, the seat of it of purple,
The midst thereof being paved with love,
From the daughters of Jerusalem.
Go forth, O ye daughters of Zion, and behold King Solomon,
With the crown wherewith his mother hath crowned him in the
day of his espousals,
And in the day of the gladness of his heart."[2]

The King in this splendor of his city life renews his suit: see how he does it — foolish wise man — by flattery, not by love; and woman's heart is won

[1] Chap. iii. 6–11.

[2] By Griffis and Daland, following Delitzsch and Ewald, this is broken up into responsive utterances by different citizens: one asks, Who is this that cometh up out of the wilderness, a second replies, Behold, it is the litter of Solomon, etc. This appears to me to impart a modern artificiality into the poem. See note on page 207, *ante*.

by love, not by flattery. The response is a renewed protestation of her devotion to her peasant lover.

DUO: SOLOMON AND THE SHULAMITE.[1]

Solomon. "Behold, thou art fair, my love; behold, thou art fair;
Thou hast doves' eyes behind thy veil:[2]
Thy hair is as a flock of goats,
That lie along the side of mount Gilead.
Thy teeth are like a flock of ewes that are newly shorn,
Which are come up from the washing;
Whereof every one hath twins,
And none is bereaved among them.
Thy lips are like a thread of scarlet,
And thy mouth is comely:
Thy temples are like a piece of a pomegranate
Behind thy veil.
Thy neck is like the tower of David builded for an armoury,
Whereon there hang a thousand bucklers,
All the shields of the mighty men.
Thy two breasts are like two fawns that are twins of a roe.
Thou art all fair, my love; and there is no spot in thee.[3]

Shulamite. "My beloved is mine and I am his,
He feedeth his flock among the lilies.
When the day breaks and the shadows flee away
I will get me to the mountain of myrrh
And to the hill of frankincense."[4]

[1] Chap. iv. 1–7.

[2] Compare chap. i. 15. She was not veiled in the country; now that she has come up to Jerusalem and the palace she wears her veil.

[3] This is all the language of symbolism, not of imagination. See page 208 ff. He praises the delicacy of her hair, the whiteness of her teeth, the purity of her complexion, the fine lines of her mouth, the perfect proportion of her neck and shoulders.

[4] For reasons for this change in the text see Dr. Griffis's *The Lily Among Thorns*, pp. 204–207. Verse 6 where it stands in the usual text makes a break in Solomon's song, which is out of character with the King, and the fact that it repeats the words of the Shulamite in chap. ii. 16, 17, affords a sufficient reason for

All the scenic effects in this drama, it must be remembered, are left to the imagination of the auditors. Already the poet has portrayed the Shulamite imagining herself at home, and her lover coming to her over the intervening hills, and his song and her reply; and again as dreaming of him by night and of herself as seeking him in vain in the city of Jerusalem; now again he portrays her day-dream of him interpreted by a duet between the two. She imagines him coming to her with his love song, full of the reminiscences of the country, — a song in spirit entirely different from that of her royal suitor's; and she gives to this peasant lover's suit an answer very different from that which she has given to the king. "A garden spring art thou," she imagines him saying to her; and herself replying, "Let my lover come into his garden and eat his precious fruit."

DUET: THE PEASANT LOVER AND THE SHULAMITE.[1]

The Peasant Lover. "Come with me from Lebanon, my bride,
With me from Lebanon:
Come from the top of Amana,
From the top of Senir and Hermon,
From the lions' dens,
From the mountains of the leopards.
Thou hast ravished my heart, my sister, my bride;
Thou hast ravished my heart with one look from thine eyes,
With one chain of thy neck.
How fair is thy love, my sister, my bride!
How much better is thy love than wine!

believing that it is here misplaced, and should be regarded as the maiden's reply to the royal suitor.

[1] Chap. iv. 8–v. 1.

And the smell of thine ointments than all manner of spices!
Thy lips, O my bride, drop honey:
Honey and milk are under thy tongue;
And the smell of thy garments is like the smell of Lebanon.
A garden barred is my sister, my bride;
A spring shut up, a fountain sealed.
Thy shoots are an orchard of pomegranates, with precious fruits;
Henna with spikenard plants,
Spikenard and saffron,
Calamus and cinnamon, with all trees of frankincense;
Myrrh and aloes, with all the chief spices.
Thou art a fountain of gardens,
A well of living waters,
And flowing streams from Lebanon.

The Shulamite. "Awake, O north wind; and come, thou south;
Blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out.
Let my beloved come into his garden,
And eat his precious fruits.

The Peasant Lover. "I am come into my garden, my sister, my bride:
I have gathered my myrrh with my spice;
I have eaten my honeycomb with my honey;
I have drunk my wine with my milk.
Eat, O friends;
Drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved."[1]

She who dreams of her peasant lover by day dreams of him also by night; she recites the dream she had while she slept, but her heart kept awake with love, and thought of him who was absent, yet to her thoughts ever present. In this dream she is at first in her peasant home; she hears his voice; he has come dressed with care for his call; his hands are anointed with the myrrh, which even

[1] The Shulamite imagines that the anticipated wedding with her peasant lover has taken place, and he, rejoicing in winning her, his bride, invites the guests to join in the wedding festivities.

the peasants used. She is reluctant to arise and soil her feet on the earthen floor; when she does arise and takes hold of the latch her hands are covered with the myrrh — but he is gone. And when she goes out to seek him, lo! she is a stranger in the strange city, unprotected and maltreated. The contradictions of the scene are just such as are common in dreams.

SOLO AND CHORUS: THE SHULAMITE AND THE COURT WOMEN.[1]

The Shulamite's Second Dream. "I was asleep, but my heart waked.
It is the voice of my beloved that knocketh, saying,
Lover. "Open to me, my sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled:
For my head is filled with dew,
My locks with the drops of the night.
Shulamite. "I have put off my coat; how shall I put it on?
I have washed my feet; how shall I defile them?
My beloved put in his hand by the hole of the door,
And my heart was moved within me.
I rose up to open to my beloved;
And my hands dropped with myrrh,
And my fingers with liquid myrrh,
Upon the handles of the bolt.
I opened to my beloved;
But my beloved had withdrawn himself, and was gone.
My soul failed me when he spake:
I sought him, but I could not find him;
I called him, but he gave me no answer.
The watchmen that go about the city found me,
They smote me, they wounded me;
The keepers of the walls took away my veil from me.
I adjure you, O daughters of Jerusalem, if ye find my beloved,
That ye tell him, that I am sick with love."

The women of the harem can see no reason why

[1] Chap. v. 2–vi. 3.

the Shulamite should refuse the tempting offer of the king for the sake of her peasant lover. What is her beloved more than any other beloved? Unsolved puzzle of all ages: why is one woman to one man more than all other women, and one man to one woman more than all other men? She cannot tell; they cannot tell; no one can tell. But it always has been so since Eve was brought to Adam and they twain became one flesh. She tries to answer by giving a portrait of him. When did a lover's portrait ever seem true to other than the lover who painted it? In our estimate of this portrait we must remember that the language is not that of imagination, but that of Oriental symbolism.[1]

Chorus of Women. "What is thy beloved more than another beloved,
O thou fairest among women?
What is thy beloved more than another beloved,
That thou dost so adjure us?

The Shulamite. "My beloved is white and ruddy,
The chiefest among ten thousand.
His head is as the most fine gold,
His locks are curling, and black as a raven.
His eyes are like doves beside the water brooks;
Washed with milk, and fitly set.
His cheeks are as a bed of spices, as banks of sweet herbs:
His lips are as lilies, dropping liquid myrrh.
His hands are as rings of gold set with beryl:
His body is as ivory work overlaid with sapphires.
His legs are as pillars of marble, set upon sockets of fine gold:
His aspect is like Lebanon, excellent as the cedars.
His mouth is most sweet: yea, he is altogether lovely.

[1] See *ante*, page 208 ff.

This is my beloved, and this is my friend,
O daughters of Jerusalem.
Chorus (*sarcastically*). "Whither is thy beloved gone,
O thou fairest among women?
Whither hath thy beloved turned him,
That we may seek him with thee?
Shulamite. "My beloved is gone down to his garden, to the beds of spices,
To feed in the gardens, and to gather lilies.
I am my beloved's, and my beloved is mine:
He feedeth his flock among the lilies."

One more effort the King makes; he promises her that if she will come to him she shall be in very truth his queen, supreme, above all others, the only one. But in vain his pleading, in vain the anticipations of her glory by the chorus of women.

SOLO AND CHORUS: SOLOMON AND THE COURT WOMEN.[1]

Solomon. "Thou art beautiful, O my love, as Tirzah,
Comely as Jerusalem,
Terrible as an army with banners.
Turn away thine eyes from me,
For they have overcome me.
Thy hair is as a flock of goats,
That lie along the side of Gilead.
Thy teeth are like a flock of ewes,
Which are come up from the washing;
Whereof every one hath twins,
And none is bereaved among them.
Thy temples are like a piece of a pomegranate
Behind thy veil.
There are threescore queens, and fourscore concubines,
And maidens without number.
But my dove, my undefiled, is but one;
She is the only one of her mother;
She is the choice one of her that bare her.

[1] Chap. vi. 4–10.

The daughters saw her, and called her blessed;
Yea, the queens and the concubines, and they praised her.
Chorus of Women. "Who is she that looketh forth as the morning,
Fair as the moon,
Clear as the sun,
Terrible as an army with banners?"

All is in vain; her heart is with her lover in the garden of nuts, watching to see whether the vine is in bud and the pomegranate is in flower; compared with these pleasures of her rural life those of the court are nothing to her. She will not be ungracious: when the women ask her to give them a specimen of her rural dancing, she complies with the request. They join in praising her grace and beauty, the king adds his praises;[1] but this commingling in the life of the court, these courtier-like flatteries, have no charm for her. Her heart is with her absent lover; she longs to return to him and to her rural life and its simple pleasures.

SOLO AND CHORUS: THE SHULAMITE, THE PEASANT LOVER, AND THE VILLAGERS.[2]

The Shulamite. "I am my beloved's,
And his desire is toward me.
Come, my beloved, let us go forth into the field;
Let us lodge in the villages.
Let us get up early to the vineyards;
Let us see whether the vine hath budded, and its blossom be open,
And the pomegranates be in flower:
There will I give thee my love.

[1] Chap. vi. 11–vii. 9. See Daland's monograph for some suggestive translations and interpretations of the description of the dance.

[2] Chap. vii. 10–viii. 7.

The mandrakes give forth fragrance,
And at our doors are all manner of precious fruits, new and old,
Which I have laid up for thee, O my beloved.
Oh that thou wert as my brother,
That sucked the breasts of my mother!
When I should find thee without, I would kiss thee;
Yea, and none would despise me.
I would lead thee, and bring thee into my mother's house,
Who would instruct me;
I would cause thee to drink of spiced wine,
Of the juice of my pomegranate.
[*To the women.*] His left hand should be under my head,
And his right hand should embrace me.
I adjure you, O daughters of Jerusalem,
That ye stir not up, nor awaken love,
Until it please."

The scene once more changes back to Northern Palestine. Love has won. The Shulamite maiden appears, leaning upon the arm of her peasant lover. The village maidens sing a song of greeting to village bride and groom, as they come back to her birthplace, to the home beneath the apple-tree where she was given birth by her mother, and given a second birth by love. For no woman is truly born into womanhood until she is born anew by love.

Chorus of Village Maidens. "Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness,
Leaning upon her beloved?
Song of Peasant Lover. "Under the apple-tree I awakened thee:
There thy mother was in travail with thee,
There was she in travail that brought thee forth.
Shulamite's Love Song. "Set me as a seal upon thine heart, as a seal upon thine arm:
For love is strong as death;

Jealousy is cruel as the grave:
The flashes thereof are flashes of fire,
A very flame of the LORD.
Many waters cannot quench love,
Neither can the floods drown it:
If a man would give all the substance of his house for love,
He would utterly be contemned."

Love is strong as death; many waters cannot quench it; floods cannot drown it; and if a man would give all the substance of his house in exchange for love he would utterly be condemned; that is the moral and meaning of this cycle of dramatic love songs.

Remembering what life was in the Orient, how far men had strayed away from the first marriage law, — one husband wedded to one wife till death do them part, — how love had died and licentiousness had taken its place in that awful system of polygamy which created the harem, can we say that there was no need of an inspired drama to produce the impression of the "Song of Songs" on the Eastern world? Are we sure, as we look at life in America, that there is no need that this impression be produced to-day on our own world? Is marriage *à la mode* unknown with us? Are there no parents who think a good match for the daughter is a match to a wealthy or a titled suitor? Are there no men who weigh love against houses and lands and call love the lighter weight of the two? Are there no women who find themselves distraught between the plea of ambition and the plea of love and know not which plea to accept? It

may be said that it is the commonplace of drama and fiction to contrast love and ambition and exalt love. But what shall we say of the writer who first told the story of this battle between love and ambition and put love first? And I doubt whether there can be found anywhere in ancient literature a story of pure womanly love antedating the Song of Songs.

I cannot but think that its lesson needs especial emphasis in our time and in our country. The higher education and the larger life of woman bring with them special temptation. Entering into literature, business, politics, woman is tempted by ambitions of which formerly she knew nothing. In public address the home is often scoffed at, the husband is treated as a slaveocrat, and the notion is sedulously advocated that woman rises into a larger life if she turns from wifehood and motherhood to the lecture-room, the professional career, the business office. These doors ought not to be shut against her; but it is impossible that these doors should be opened, and that larger life given, and all the powers quickened by a broader education, without subjecting her to the temptation to take ambition in place of love. Against the notion that it is a nobler thing to be in business, in a profession, in politics, in literature, or on the platform than to be the life-companion of one man, loving him with fidelity and loved by him, this Song of Songs exerts its sweet and sacred influence in

behalf of love strong as death, . . . a very flame of the Lord.

In some true sense to every one of us, man or woman, come love and ambition: God who is love, and the world which is ambition.[1] As Hercules was invited in one direction by pleasure and in the other by wisdom, so every one of us is called in one direction by ambition and in the other direction by love; and the great and final message of the Song of Songs is that love is the supreme factor in human life. And this truth of life is itself a parable, interpreting the still deeper truth that to love God and to be united to him is at once the supreme end and the supreme felicity of life. For the Song of Songs is an allegory in the same sense in which marriage is a symbol. The lesson of the Song of Songs is the strength and the joy of human love; but that is itself a prophetic interpretation of the strength and the joy of God's love for his own, and of their love for him.

[1] "The typical interpretation is perfectly compatible with Ewald's view, and, indeed, if combined with it, is materially improved; the heroine's true love then represents God, and Solomon, in better agreement with his historical position and character, represents the blandishments of the world, unable to divert the hearts of his faithful servants from him." *An Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament*, by S. R. Driver, D. D., p. 451.

CHAPTER X

A SPIRITUAL TRAGEDY

THE Book of Job is unique in literature. It is almost impossible to classify it. Professor Genung calls it "The Epic of the Inner Life." It is, however, only by a kind of figure that it can be so called. The epic poem is supposed to relate at length and in metrical form "a series of heroic achievements or events under supernatural guidance." [1] This the Book of Job does not do. Professor Genung explains the title which he gives to the book, and with the explanation the title is exceedingly felicitous: "I regard," he says, "this ancient book as the record of a sublime epic action, whose scene is not the tumultuous battle-field, nor the arena of rash adventure, but the solitary soul of a righteous man." [2] But on the one hand, to designate the narrative of such a struggle in the soul of a righteous man as an epic is to give to the word a new, though a not inappropriate meaning; and on the other, this description of the poem indicates but one phase, and not the most important nor even the most interesting phase, of the book.

[1] *Century Dictionary.*

[2] *The Epic of the Inner Life*, by John F. Genung, pp. 20–26.

It is called, with great verisimilitude, a drama, by John Owen, and he not inaptly compares it with "The Prometheus Bound" of Æschylus, Goethe's "Faust," Shakespeare's "Hamlet," and Calderon's "Wonder-Working Magician."[1] Yet this word "drama" certainly suggests, if it does not require, action accompanying and helping to create the necessity for the speech, and in the Book of Job, except in the prologue, there is no action. Whatever may be said of its spirit, in its form it does not resemble the other great dramas to which Mr. Owen compares it. Biblical scholars have generally classified the Book of Job with the "Wisdom Literature." The Wisdom Literature was the nearest approximation which the Hebrews made to philosophy. The philosopher is interested in truth for its own sake; interested in the interrelationship of different truths; interested in correlating and harmonizing truths and so adjusting them as to make a more or less complete system of truth. The Hebrew had little or no interest in this process; he never undertook it; he was interested in truths but not in truth, and in truths only as they bore upon conduct and life. His wisdom, therefore, took the form not of general systems, but of specific affirmations of principles in their relation to actual life conditions. The Hebrew's philosophy was not abstract, but concrete; not generic, but applied; not scholastic, but expressed in the terms of experience. Thus the tendency of his philosophy

[1] *The Five Great Sceptical Dramas of History*, by John Owen.

was either to aphoristic forms, as in the Book of Proverbs; or to dramatic forms, as in the Song of Songs and the Book of Job; or to an admixture of the two, as in the Book of Ecclesiastes. On the whole it appears to me that in Biblical criticism the Book of Job has been correctly classified; that its epic character — as the narrative of a soul struggle, — and its dramatic character — as the interplay of human thought and emotion, — are subsidiary to its philosophic character, as the discussion of a profound problem of human life; but that this discussion is not abstract and intellectual but vital and dramatic. Its interest lies not in any theory which it promulgates, but in human experience and in the bearing of a popular theory upon human experience in a time of trial. Professor Kent calls the book "Philosophical Drama."[1] I should rather, with a slight difference in emphasis, call it Dramatic Philosophy.[2]

[1] *The Wise Men of Ancient History and their Proverbs*, by Charles Foster Kent, Ph. D.

[2] It is hardly necessary to consider as a possible theory that the Book of Job is historical; the epilogue alone is quite conclusive upon that point. At the same time it is possible that it had an historical foundation, as most of the greater works of fiction have had. "'Hamlet' rests on an historical foundation; so does 'Macbeth;' yet they are works of imagination. 'The Ring and the Book' is founded on fact; Mr. Browning dug the substance of the story out of an old law report. In Ezekiel Job is referred to as if he were a well-known person. It is possible, of course, that the allusion here may be literary. We often speak of Polonius, or Colonel Newcome, or Mr. Pickwick as though they were real characters. It is, however, altogether probable that Job was an historical person, and that traditions concerning him were current

Without, then, endeavoring to classify the Book of Job, we may say of it that it has some of the qualities of all three types of literature, — the epic, the drama, philosophy, but not all of the characteristics of either. If it be regarded as an epic, it is what Professor Genung calls it, an epic of the inner life. The epics of Homer deal with external adventure and with character as it is evolved out of and manifested in adventurous experiences. There is no action in the Book of Job. Throughout the poem the central figure sits among the ashes, his only adventures those of the spirit, striving by much vain reflection to solve the mystery of life. Not even by external symbols, as in Dante, are his spiritual struggles represented. If the book be regarded as a drama it is a monodrama. The celestial movement is introduced in the prologue simply to interpret the drama to us; the wife and the friends are but foils, partly to give occasion to Job's discourse, partly by contrast to interpret it. All attempt to find in them distinctive characters is in vain. Froude well says, "The friends repeat one another with but little difference; the sameness being of course intentional, as showing that they were not speaking for themselves but as representatives of a prevailing opinion." [1] The only actor in the drama is Job himself; the only action the

among the Jews." *Seven Puzzling Bible Books*, by Washington Gladden, D. D., p. 109.

[1] *Short Studies on Great Subjects*: *The Book of Job*, by James Anthony Froude, M. A., p. 249.

battle between faith and skepticism, hope and despair, in his own soul. If the book be regarded as philosophy, it is philosophy translated into the terms of experience. There is here no philosopher coolly studying the problem of life as a geologist studies an ancient fossil, or an anatomist the dead body which he dissects. The problems of life, love, death, and sorrow are not studied as problems. There is no argument here for immortality as in the Phædo of Socrates, no argument for the existence of a God as in Diman's "Theistic Argument" or Flint's "Theism," no balancing of probabilities to reach a conclusion as in Bishop Butler's "Analogy of Religion." The soul of a good and godly man is portrayed in its living agony, seeking to find, in spite of the apparent injustice of life, a ground for its faith in the reality and the sovereignty of truth and goodness. Job is a kind of spiritual Laocöon, wrestling with the twin serpents of doubt and despair, and to him they are such dreadful realities that he has no thought for fine philosophies or scientific reasonings. The method of the Book of Job is the reverse of the scientific method; the problem is presented to the reader as one of experience, not as one of philosophy.

The date of the book is entirely unknown, as is its author; formerly it was supposed to be one of the oldest books in the Bible;[1] modern scholars

[1] Thus in Townsend's Bible, which undertook to print the whole of the Bible in a true chronological order, the Book of Job is printed among the Genesis narratives immediately prior to the

regard it as one of the latest.[1] Thus the supposed date for its composition has fluctuated between B. C. 2337 and B. C. 400. The arguments for the earlier date may all be summed up in the fact that the scene is laid in the patriarchal age; the chief argument for the later date is that the line of thought in the book presupposes a much later intellectual development than can be attributed to the patriarchs.[2]

Whatever the date of the composition, there is no doubt as to the time fixed in the author's mind for the events described and the discussion to which those events give rise. It is as certain that the Book of Job deals with conditions existing prior to the giving of the law under Moses, as it is that Shakespeare's "Julius Cæsar" deals with scenes and events in Rome in the first century before Christ. And while the date and authorship of the

call of Abram. Mr. Townsend says, "The life of Job is placed before the life of Abraham, on the authority of Dr. Hales. Job himself, or one of his contemporaries, is generally supposed to have been the author of this book; which Moses obtained when in Midian, and, with some alterations, addressed to the Israelites." *The Old Testament arranged in Historical and Chronological Order*, by the Rev. George Townsend, M. A., p. 35, note.

[1] "It is not possible to fix the date of the Book (Job) *precisely;* but it will certainly not be earlier than the age of Jeremiah, and most probably it was written either during or shortly after the Babylonian captivity." *An Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament*, by S. R. Driver, D. D., p. 432.

[2] For the arguments for the earlier date see note in Townsend's Bible, p. 35; for arguments for the later date see Driver's *Introduction*, pp. 431–435, and *The Book of Job*, by R. W. Raymond, Ph. D., pp. 50–62.

book are matters of no considerable importance, the date affixed by the author to the scenes and discussions in the book is of the first importance. The discussions of the book concern the profoundest problems of religion; but there is no suggestion in it of a temple, a tabernacle, a Levitical priesthood, a sacrificial system, the Ten Commandments, or to any prophet or any events in Jewish history, or indeed to any revelation of God whatever other than that which is made through nature. The object of the book, whoever wrote it, and whenever it was written, is to portray the mental and spiritual conditions of an earnest and devout soul, confronted by the profoundest problem of human life, — the significance of suffering, — with no other light upon that problem than such as is afforded by a study of nature. This fact is to be kept constantly in mind in reading this poem. It cannot be understood at all, except as the reader puts himself back in imagination into the early patriarchal age, the age of Abram before his vision of God, the age which preceded or was outside of all special revelation of God in and to human experience through prophets or lawgivers. The success with which the author has achieved the difficult task, not merely of portraying the outward character of this age, but of interpreting its mental and moral conditions, constitutes the strongest reason for questioning the conclusion of modern scholars that it was written after the age of Solomon. If they are right in their conclusions, — and on such

questions it is generally wise for the inexpert reader to accept the conclusions of the expert, — the imaginative genius of the unknown author is almost without a parallel in literature. Historic dramas and novels are almost invariably full of anachronisms. Not only the outward life is often imperfectly portrayed, but habitually sentiments and thoughts which belong to a later age are imputed to the characters of a previous age. Shakespeare's historic plays do not attempt accuracy either in their historic setting or in their psychological portraiture. Walter Scott's historical novels have even less vraisemblance to the mental and moral life of the times in which they are laid. Of modern novels "Henry Esmond" and "Lorna Doone" are perhaps the only two which can be said to approximate accuracy as historical pictures of either the outer or the inner life. But the Book of Job is almost if not absolutely free from anachronisms. All that we know of the patriarchal age leads us to the conclusion that the book is photographic in its realistic portraiture of that time, and in its sympathetic understanding of the thoughts of a people unto whom no light had come from any open vision. Let us try first to restate to ourselves in undramatic form the mental state of such a people.

Says George Eliot, "A shadowy conception of power that by much persuasion can be induced to refrain from inflicting harm, is the shape most easily taken by the sense of the Invisible in the minds of men who have always been pressed close

by primitive wants, and to whom a life of hard toil has never been illuminated by any enthusiastic religious faith."[1] That she here correctly describes the primitive form of religious belief, which is founded on fear of some unknown supernatural power or powers, is clear to all who have made any study of pagan religions. Imagine that there has been gradually added to this earliest belief the conviction expressed in Abram's question, "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" the conviction that there is one God and that he is a righteous God; the deduction is inevitable and irresistible, that the way to avoid the harm which he can and sometimes does inflict is by living righteously. Thus life is conceived of as under divine law and a divine lawgiver; if we obey his righteous will and are righteous he will reward us; if we disobey his righteous will and are unrighteous he will punish us. Happiness and suffering cease to be regarded as either accidental occurrences or arbitrary inflictions; they constitute a system of rewards and punishments; prosperity is interpreted as a sign of divine approval, and suffering as a sign of divine condemnation. Thus far and no farther had religious faith developed in the patriarchal age. The reward of virtue was attested in Abram's career by a great wealth of flocks and herds; the penalty of vice was attested by the destruction of the Cities of the Plain. What measure of truth there is in this conception of happiness and suffering as a divine

[1] *Silas Marner*, by George Eliot, chap. i.

system of rewards and penalties, it does not come within my province here to consider; that it is the whole truth no one will believe who regards Jesus Christ as at once the supreme object of his Father's approving love and as the Man of Sorrows. That pain is sometimes penal is certain; that it has other ministries than punishment is also certain; that it is in itself an evidence of divine disfavor no Christian believer can for a moment seriously suppose. But in the patriarchal age this was the universal estimate of the place of pain in the divine economy.

Trained in this belief until it had become axiomatic with him, not an opinion consciously deduced from a study of life, but a part of his intellectual existence into which he had grown from his youth up, Job had lived a virtuous life and had prospered. His religion had been real, not formal; had ruled his life, not merely served as an appendage to it. Stung by the reproaches of his friends he thus describes the spirit of his life; and the divine approval explicitly expressed by Jehovah, alike in the prologue and at the end of the drama, shows conclusively that it is no complacent self-portraiture of an unconscious pretender, but is intended by the author as a dramatic representation of the hero of his story.

"Oh that I were as in the months of old,
As in the days when God watched over me;
When his lamp shined upon my head,
And by his light I walked through darkness;
As I was in my autumn days,

When the friendship of God was over my tent;
When the Almighty was yet with me,
And my children were about me;
When my steps were washed with butter
And the rock poured me out rivers of oil;
When I went forth to the gate by the city;
When I fixed my seat in the open place.
The young men saw me, and withdrew themselves,
And the aged rose up and stood;
The princes refrained talking
And laid their hand on their mouth;
The voice of the nobles was hushed,
And their tongue cleaved to the roof of their mouth.
For the ear that heard blessed me;
And the eye that saw bare witness for me;
Because I had delivered the poor when he cried,
The fatherless also, and him that had no helper.
The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me;
And I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy.
I clothed myself with justice, and it clothed itself with me;
As a mantle and as a turban was my judgment.
I was eyes to the blind,
And feet was I to the lame.
I was a father to the needy
And the cause of him that I knew not I searched out.
And I brake the fangs of the unrighteous
And from his teeth I snatched the prey."[1]

Such was the character, such the previous life of the central figure in the poem, by whose experience the current theology of his time is to be tested;

[1] Job xxix. 2–17. The translations throughout this chapter are taken either from the Revised Version, or from Professor Genung's translation in *The Epic of the Inner Life*, or are produced by a combination of the two. To Professor Genung's volume, one of the best fruits of the modern or literary study of the Bible, I desire to acknowledge my special indebtedness in the preparation of this chapter.

in whose experience the world drama of life, love, death, and sorrow is to be portrayed; through whose experience also is to be illustrated, if I read the story aright, the soul's need of some other revelation of God and his truth than is afforded by the mere study of nature and of life.

The drama opens with a prologue in the celestial sphere. The sons of God come on a certain day before the throne of Jehovah to give an account of themselves. They are like inspectors who have gone out into the various parts of the king's domain and come back to report what they have seen. One of them is called the Adversary. He is not the embodiment of all evil, — a demon of malice, a prince of wickedness, the Satan of Milton, the Apollyon of Bunyan. He is a type of wickedness in its earlier stages; the cynic among the angels; who does not believe in disinterested virtue; but who yet makes his tour of the earth with other angels and with them comes, unforbidden, into the court of heaven to report what he has seen. To this cynic Jehovah says: "Have you considered Job, my servant, how upright a man he is?" "Upright!" replies the Adversary; "who would not be upright if he were paid as well as Job? Doth he serve God for naught? Take away his prosperity and see how quickly he will part with his uprightness." Thus dramatically is presented the one conclusive argument against the doctrine that virtue is paid for by Providence. If it were paid for it would not be virtue; it would only be a

subtler and shrewder form of self-service. The argument is not formulated, but its force is instinctively felt by the reader, who perceives that if Job does not stand the test proposed he will be proved not to have been virtuous but only shrewd. Virtue must be its own reward or it is no virtue. To this unexpressed premise of the cynic's argument Jehovah accedes; he accepts the challenge; and he gives the Adversary freedom to apply the test himself; "only," he says, "upon him put not forth thine hand."

The scene is shifted to the earth, where the Adversary's work is seen by the spectator, though the part of the Adversary is unknown to those who suffer from it. There is a family gathering; all the sons and daughters of Job have met in the eldest brother's house; Job, as we should say providentially, is somewhere without, when a messenger comes to him with the word that the Sabeans in a foray have carried off a portion of his property and slain the servants; a second messenger treads close upon his heels with the report of a bolt of lightning which has destroyed his sheep and killed the shepherds; a third follows with the word that three bands of Chaldeans have carried off the camels and slain their keepers; a fourth that a great wind has smitten the house in which his sons and daughters were feasting and buried them in the ruins and not one has escaped alive. This morning Job was prosperous and happy; now he is in poverty and bereaved. But he does not surrender his

virtue nor lose his faith. "Naked," he says, "I came into the world, and naked shall I go out; Jehovah hath given, Jehovah hath taken away; blessed be the name of Jehovah."

The scene shifts back to the celestial sphere, where the cynic comes with the other angels to make his report. Jehovah asks him if he is satisfied that Job's virtue was disinterested: "He still holdeth fast his integrity, although thou movedest me against him to destroy him without cause." But the cynic is not satisfied: "Skin for skin," he says; "yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life. But put forth thine hand now and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will renounce thee to thy face." Jehovah accepts the second challenge; again gives the Adversary permission to do his worst to Job, so that he save him alive. And the Adversary goes forth, first to smite Job with a painful and humiliating disease; then to turn his wife also into a cynic;[1] and finally to send him three friends to console him by telling him that he must have been a great sinner or he could not be a

[1] "One of the curious difficulties of the Book of Job is the various renderings of which its somewhat strange language seems to be capable. In our English Bible the wife's counsel is 'Curse God and die.' In the vulgate, followed by the French, it is 'Bless God and die.' And yet, radical as seems the difference, the difference is more apparent than real; in the one case she speaks seriously, 'Of what benefit is your God to you? Curse him and then die;' in the other she speaks ironically, 'You bless your Jehovah, do you? you worship him? you say blessed be the name of Jehovah that taketh away? Well, bless him and die! What will he do for your blessing?"

great sufferer. So the Epilogue ends, and the true drama, the debate between Job and his friends, begins. His wife believes in his integrity, but not in his principles. She sneers at his faith; counsels him to abandon it; and advises suicide as a last and only refuge. His friends share his sorrow, share it so heartily that for seven days and nights they sit speechless beside him; but while they believe in his theology they do not believe in his integrity; for truth to tell, it is impossible to believe in both. That theology is very simple: Jehovah is the ruler of life and Jehovah is just; therefore if suffering has fallen upon any man it must be because he has sinned and deserves punishment. First gently, then with continually increasing pungency, and sometimes with temper, they urge Job to confess the sins which he has kept concealed from his fellows, and so escape the continued displeasure of his God.

At times Job seems inclined to accept his wife's counsel. He does not curse God, but he curses the day wherein he was born with an execration so bitter that it arouses the pious protest of his friend Eliphaz. He does not commit suicide nor think of so doing, but he longs for death, and beseeches Jehovah to crush him.

"Wherefore," he cries, "is light given to him that is in misery,
And life unto the bitter in soul?
Which long for death but it cometh not,
And dig for it more than for hid treasures,
Which rejoice exceedingly,
And are glad when they can find the grave?

> Why is light given to a man whose way is hid,
> And whom God hath hedged in?"[1]

But never once does he yield to the exhortations of his orthodox friends; never once does he lose faith in his own integrity; never once does he entertain, even for an instant, the suggestion that he make his peace with the unknown God, by pretending to a confession of sins which he has not committed, a penitence which he does not feel, and a recognition of the justice of his sufferings against which his soul vehemently protests. It is this conflict between the theology which had become a part of his religion, and this truth of life which nothing will induce him to deny, which makes the tragedy of his spiritual experience. His religion has been built on his faith that a just God is the ruler of this life, and therefore this life is just. To him has never come any external revelation; he knows nothing of the deliverance of Israel from Egypt; of the passage through the Red Sea; of the giving of the law to Moses at Mt. Sinai; of the preservation of Israel in the wanderings in the wilderness; of God's patient forgiveness of his sinning people; of Joshua's victories; of David's songful visions of God; of Elijah's experiences of divine support. He cannot buttress his weakened faith by resting in these confirmatory experiences of others. He can get no help from his wife, who has abandoned faith in his theology; nor from his friends, who have abandoned faith in him; nor from any

[1] Job iii. 20–23.

accepted hope in a future life which may redress the wrongs of this, for in his age there is no such hope. To him, as to the men of his time, life is but a breath, which man gaspeth out and then is gone.

"The cloud vanisheth away, and is gone,
So he that goeth down to the grave shall not come up again."[1]

What to believe he knows not; only he knows this, that he has not so sinned as to deserve this punishment. The tragedy of his life is not that his property has been swept away, his children slain, his health destroyed, his wife made a tempter, his friends a deceitful hope, "like a channel of brooks that pass away," leaving but a dry bed to taunt the thirst of the perishing pilgrim. The tragedy is this: that his conception of life as a kingdom ruled over by a just God is shattered, and his faith in God himself as a God of justice is darkened and at times well-nigh destroyed. The foundation of his moral life — his faith in the supremacy of righteousness — is imperiled, and he realizes the peril. His anguish of spirit presages that cry of a greater Sufferer than Job, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" while he has not, as that Divine Sufferer had, the unconquerable faith, which even in the hour when he seemed forsaken could still cry, "*My* God."

The theology of his friends is entirely self-consistent; the only difficulty with it is that it is not consistent with the facts of life. This theology is

[1] Job vii. 9.

put by Eliphaz in his first speech of pious counsel to Job:

"Bethink thee now; who that was guiltless hath perished,
And where have the upright been cut off?
As I have seen — they that plough iniquity,
And that sow wickedness, reap the same.
By the breath of God they perish,
And by the blast of his anger they are consumed." [1]

The practical application follows logically enough, though Eliphaz leaves Bildad to state it:

"Doth God pervert judgment?
Or doth the Almighty pervert justice?
If thy children have sinned against him,
And he have delivered them into the hand of their transgression:
If thou wouldest seek diligently unto God,
And make thy supplication to the Almighty;
If thou wert pure and upright;
Surely now he would awake for thee,
And make the habitation of thy righteousness prosperous.
And though thy beginning was small
Yet thy latter end should greatly increase." [2]

And when Job indignantly resents the implication that he has been a great sinner else great suffering would not have fallen upon him, his friends are quite ready to invent facts in order to sustain their theory. He must have sinned or he would not have been punished: so Eliphaz concludes:

"Is not thy wickedness great?
Neither is there any end to thine iniquities.
For thou hast taken pledges of thy brother for nought,
And stripped the naked of their clothing.
Thou hast not given water to the weary to drink,

[1] Job iv. 7–9.
[2] Job viii. 3–7.

And thou hast withholden bread from the hungry.
While the man of the strong arm — his was the land,
And the respected of persons dwelt therein!
Thou hast sent widows away empty,
And the arms of the fatherless have been broken.
Therefore snares are round about thee,
And sudden fear troubleth thee,
Or darkness, that thou canst not see,
And abundance of waters cover thee." [1]

The argument is very simple, and would be entirely adequate if it were in accordance with the facts, but it is not; and it angers Job, not because it is unjust to him, but because it is false and assumes that God is one to be pleased with falsehood used in his defense. Job's splendid burst of indignation against the use of falsehood in defense of God is one of the most notable passages in the poem, and deserves to be often repeated in our own time. For in all ages, alas! even in ours also, ecclesiasticism has imagined that the cause of religion can be supported by falsehood, and that the spirit of reverence can be nurtured by denying or concealing from ourselves and others the facts of life. Job protests against all such special pleading for God:

"Will ye speak lies for God,
And talk deceitfully for him?
Will ye show him favor?
Will ye be special pleaders for God?" [2]

But if the theology of the three friends is simple and consistent, Job's is not. In truth he has no

[1] Job xxii. 5–11.
[2] Job xiii. 7, 8.

theology; he has only experience. This experience to which, when we share it, we rarely dare to give expression, he utters with an abandon which seems to his companions profane, and which to the modern reader would perhaps seem so were it not found in the Bible, and there somewhat softened by the Authorized Version. The experience of a soul in vain endeavoring to harmonize the apparent injustice and even cruelty of life, when he is suffering from it, with his faith in the justice and goodness of God, in whom he is struggling to retain his faith, is never consistent. Job recognizes and confesses his own inconsistency: "I am not myself," he cries; and this inconsistency he attributes to the right cause, — the indignation born of his wretchedness and aggravated by the self-complacent counsels of his friends.

> "Oh that my indignation were weighed, were weighed,
> And my calamity were laid in the balances against it!
> For now it would be heavier than the sand of the seas:
> Therefore have my words been rash.
> For the arrows of the Almighty are within me,
> Whose poison my spirit drinketh up." [1]

At times he resents with bitter scorn their cool assumption that he must be a sinner above all others because his afflictions are so great; at times he pleads with them with touching pathos to put themselves in his place, and trust him, their old and well proved friend.

> "Now therefore be pleased to look upon me;
> For surely I shall not lie to your face.

[1] Job vi. 2–4.

Return, I pray you, let there be no injustice
Yea, return again, my cause is righteous.
Is there injustice on my tongue?
Cannot my sense discern what is wrong?"[1]

He confesses that he is not faultless: —

"How shall a man be just before God?
If one should desire to contend with him
He could not answer him one of a thousand."[2]

But he calls himself "the just, the upright;" denies that he has done anything to deserve the afflictions which have fallen upon him, and declares that innocence is vain, and virtue no protection against the Almighty and the Inscrutable One.

"I know that thou wilt not hold me innocent.
I shall be condemned;
Why then do I labor in vain?
If I wash myself with snow water
And make my hands never so clean;
Yet wilt thou plunge me in the ditch,
And mine own clothes shall abhor me."[3]

But he does not concede the justice of this condemnation; he resents it; he affirms its essential injustice; he has no fear of a Day of Judgment and he will not pretend. On the contrary he longs for it; and with the splendid audacity of self-conscious virtue he challenges God to make known the verdict against him, a challenge which he repeats again and again.

"Is it good unto thee that thou shouldest oppress,
That thou shouldest despise the work of thine hands,
And shine upon the counsel of the wicked?

[1] Job vi. 28–30. [2] Job ix. 2, 3.
[3] Job ix. 28–31.

Hast thou eyes of flesh,
Or seest thou as man seeth?
Are thy days as the days of man,
Or thy years as man's days,
That thou inquirest after mine iniquity,
And searchest after my sin,
Although thou knowest that I am not wicked;
And there is none that can deliver out of thine hand?" [1]

And he insists that his experience of the injustice of life is not peculiar. His friends aver that virtue is always rewarded and sin is always punished: they have described life as they think it ought to be. He describes life as it is; and if it must be conceded that his picture is much too dark, yet it is not darker than it often appears to the soul tried in the experience of an apparently unjust sorrow, as Job is tried.

"Wherefore do the wicked live,
Become old, yea, wax mighty in power?
Their seed is established with them in their sight,
And their offspring before their eyes.
Their houses are safe from fear,
Neither is the rod of God upon them.
Their bull gendereth and faileth not;
Their cow calveth and casteth not her calf.
They send forth their little ones like a flock,
And their children dance.
They sing to the timbrel and harp,
And rejoice at the sound of the pipe.
They spend their days in prosperity,
And in a moment they go down to the grave.
Yet they said unto God, Depart from us;
For we desire not the knowledge of thy ways.
What is the Almighty that we should serve him?
And what profit should we have if we pray unto him?" [2]

[1] Job x. 3–7. [2] Job xxi. 7–15.

To the insistence of his friends that the prosperity of the wicked is short-lived, "that his prosperity shall not endure," that

> "The heavens shall reveal his iniquity,
> And earth shall rise up against him,
> And the increase of him shall depart,"

Job replies scornfully: —

> "How oft is it that the lamp of the wicked is put out?
> That their destruction cometh upon them?
> That God distributeth sorrows in his anger?
> That they are as stubble before the wind
> And as chaff that the storm carrieth away?
> Ye say, God layeth up his iniquity for his children.
> Let him recompense it unto the wicked himself, that he may feel it.
> Let his own eyes see his destruction,
> And let himself drink of the wrath of the Almighty."[1]

If Job could but believe in immortality he might derive some consolation from such a belief; not so much because it would give him a reward hereafter to compensate for the suffering here, for Job does serve God for naught, and his complainings are less against the sufferings which have fallen upon himself than against the revelation of the injustice of life which those sufferings have brought to him. But if he could believe in immortality he might believe in divine justice. He argues with himself; tries to persuade himself of immortality; seeks in nature for someanalys is to furnish such a hope; but with the result which generally has attended similar endeavors: a hope of immortality founded

[1] Job xxi. 17–20.

on an analysis drawn from nature furnishes but a poor support in time of actual trial: —

. . . "there is hope of a tree, if it be cut down, that it will sprout again
And that the tender branch thereof will not cease.
Though the root thereof wax old in the earth,
And the stock thereof die in the ground;
Yet through the scent of water it will bud,
And put forth boughs like a plant.
But man dieth, and wasteth away:
Yea, man gaspeth out his breath, — and where is he?
As the waters fail from the sea
And the river decayeth and drieth up;
So man lieth down and riseth not;
Till the heavens be no more they shall not awake,
Nor be roused out of their sleep.
Oh that thou wouldest hide me in the grave;
That thou wouldest keep me secret, until thy wrath be past,
That thou wouldest appoint me a set time and remember me!
If a man die shall he live again?
Then all the days of my warfare would I wait,
Till my release should come." [1]

Once indeed out of his very despair a hope of immortality is struck as a spark by the blow of flint on steel, but only to expire as speedily as such a spark. He cannot disbelieve in the divine justice; this life is not just; therefore there must come, there will come, a day of vindication: —

"I know that my Vindicator liveth, —
And that he shall stand up at the last upon the earth:
And after my skin hath been thus destroyed,
Yet without my flesh shall I see God:
Whom I shall see for myself,
And mine eyes shall behold and not another." [2]

[1] Job xiv. 7–14.

[2] Job xix. 25–27. The word Redeemer or Vindicator "denotes

But this hope, born of despair, is but a momentary gleam, like a star shining through a murky atmosphere; then the clouds roll up again and it is gone.

The bitterness of Job's experience is not that his theology is shattered — he does not lament its loss; nor that his faith in immortality is overthrown — he lived before the age of faith in immortality and was learning one ground of that faith in learning the imperfection and injustice of this earthly life, if this life is indeed all. It is not even in the desertion of him by his friends or the scornful abandonment of his faith by his wife. It is that the God whom he had believed to be a just God and a personal friend has become in his thought a personal Enemy, an Adversary, a Spy of Men,[1] whose justice it is well-nigh impossible for him any longer to believe in. He tauntingly

the next of kin whose duty it was to avenge the blood of a murdered man (see Numbers xxxv. 19), and to succor the bereaved and needy (see Ruth iii. 9–13; iv. 1–8). With wonderful skill Job chooses the word that gathers into itself all that he has longed for; it means one who will befriend him, avenge his wrong, be his Daysman, make God his friend again." *The Epic of the Inner Life*, by John F. Genung, p. 236, note. Does it not rather mean God himself? is it not a spiritual reaction from his skepticism back into his fundamental faith in the righteousness of God? A similar reaction is illustrated in the contrast in chapter xxiii. between verses 8, 9 and verse 10. The phrase rendered in the Authorized Version "in my flesh" is literally "from my flesh," and might mean either "out from my flesh" or "apart from my flesh." The context clearly demands the latter rendering, and "without my flesh" is given by the Revision in the margin.

[1] Job vii. 20, Renan's translation. "Watcher of men" in Revised Version.

challenges God to produce his accusations; he would meet them as a prince; he would glory in them. It almost seems as though by his challenge he would provoke the Almighty to this trial in the court of reason and of justice: —

"Oh that I had one to hear me!
(Lo, here is my signature, let the Almighty answer me.)
And that I had the indictment which mine adversary hath written!
Surely, I would carry it upon my shoulder;
I would bind it unto me as a crown.
I would declare unto him the number of my steps;
As a prince would I go near unto him."[1]

But the Almighty keeps silence. Would even that he would reveal himself through another; that some man would come in human experience to interpret the Unknown: —

"He is not a man like me, that I should answer him,
That we should come together in judgment;
Nor is there any daysman betwixt us,
That might lay his hand upon us both."[2]

But God sends no Daysman, no Interpreter; he presents no charges; he makes no revelation; He is the Unknown and the Unknowable, the Almighty yet the Inscrutable. This self-hiding of God is the gravamen of Job's complaint against him:

"Oh that I knew where I might find him!
That I might come even to his seat!
I would set in order my cause before him;
And fill my mouth with arguments.
I would know the words which he would answer me;
And understand what he would say unto me.

[1] Job xxxi. 35–37. [2] Job ix. 32, 33.

Would he contend with me in the greatness of his power?
Nay; but surely he would give heed unto me.
There the upright might reason with him;
So should I be delivered forever from my judge.
Behold I go forward, but he is not there;
And backward, but I cannot perceive him:
On the left hand, when he doth work, but I cannot behold him;
And on the right hand he hideth himself that I cannot see him."[1]

Job even doubts at times whether the case would be bettered if God were to reveal himself; responds to the imagined indictment against himself by an indictment of his judge, which in one breath he utters, in the next half takes back.

"Though I were righteous, yet would I not answer;
Must I make supplication to mine adversary?
If I had called, and he had answered me,
Yet would I not believe that he hearkened unto my voice.
For he breaketh me with a tempest,
And multiplieth my wounds without cause.
He suffereth me not to recover my breath,
For he surfeiteth me with bitternesses.
Is the question of strength, — behold, the Mighty One He!
Of judgment, — 'Who will set me a day?'
Were I righteous, mine own mouth would condemn me;
Perfect were I, yet would he prove me perverse.
Perfect I *am*, — I value not my soul — I despise my life —
It is all one — therefore I say,
Perfect and wicked he consumeth alike.
If the scourge destroyeth suddenly,
He mocketh at the dismay of the innocent.
The earth is given over into the hands of the wicked;
The face of the judges he veileth; —
If is not he, who then is it?"[2]

At length the passionate indignation of Job burns itself out; his friends are silenced and no

[1] Job xxiii. 3–9. [2] Job ix. 15–24.

longer add fuel to the flames;[1] and he himself presages the conclusion to which the monodrama eventually conducts the reader.[2] A theodicy is impossible; the ways of God are not to be justified to man; we are too little and he is too great for our understanding of him; at best we know truth only in fragments; we are surrounded on every side by the Infinite, and we can peer but a little way into its solemn mysteries. Men mine for the precious metals; where no bird has ever flown and no beast has ever made a pathway for himself, man discovers the silver and the gold, and the precious stones. So where no man has ever gone, where no winged imagination has ever soared, no human enterprise has ever explored a way, is wisdom hidden: God alone knows its hiding place.

[1] It does not come within the province of this chapter to consider the question whether the speech of Elihu (chapters xxxii.–xxxvii.) is an interpolation or not. Froude summarizes well the arguments in the affirmative (*Short Studies*, vol. i. p. 257, note); Genung the arguments in the negative (*The Epic of the Inner Life*, p. 78, note). In either case, as Genung says, it "presents the friends' side of the question freed from the heats and disturbances of the controversy, and brought to its best expression," and therefore it may be omitted from further consideration here.

[2] Professor Moulton puts the passage paralleling the miner's search for gold with the philosopher's search for wisdom into the mouth of Zophar. *The Modern Reader's Bible.* There is admittedly some difficulty in the text, and it seems not improbable that chapter xxvii. 8–23 was uttered by Zophar, not by Job, since it agrees with the general position of the three friends and disagrees with that insisted on by Job. But chapter xxviii. anticipates the conclusion of the whole poem, and clearly in its spirit belongs rather to Job, to whom life is a profound mystery, than to the three friends, who can see no mystery in it.

"Surely, there is a mine for silver
And a place for gold which they refine.
Iron is taken out of the earth,
And brass is molten out of the stone.
. . . . . .
That path no bird of prey knoweth,
Neither hath the falcon's eye seen it;
The proud beasts have not trodden it,
Nor hath the fierce lion passed thereby.
He putteth forth his hand upon the flinty rock;
He overturneth the mountains by the roots.
He cutteth out channels among the rocks;
And his eye seeth every precious thing.
He bindeth the streams that they trickle not;
And the thing that is hid bringeth he forth to light.
But Wisdom — where shall it be found?
And where is the place of understanding?
Man knoweth not the price thereof;
Neither is it found in the land of the living.
The deep saith, It is not in me;
And the sea saith, It is not with me.
. . . . . ;
God understandeth the way thereof,
And he knoweth the place thereof,
For he looketh to the ends of the earth,
And seeth under the whole heaven;
To make a weight for the wind;
Yea, he meteth out the waters by measure,
When he made a decree for the rain,
And a way for the lightning of the thunder;
Then did he see it and declare it:
He established it, yea, and searched it out.
And unto man he said,
Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is Wisdom;
And to depart from evil is understanding." [1]

This is the conclusion to which the author of Ecclesiastes comes; it is the final and only con-

[1] Job xxviii. 1–28.

clusion of the Wisdom Literature of the Ancient Hebrews; the conclusion of a consecrated and devout agnosticism. It recalls also the conclusion of Paul, the Christian analogue of the Ancient Hebrew wise man: "Now we see truth as in a mirror in enigmatical reflections, but then face to face; now I know only from fragments, then shall I know thoroughly, even also as I am known. But even as things are, there abide faith, hope, love, — these three. But the greatest of these is love." [1] And when at the close of this monodrama God answers Job and his friends out of the whirlwind, this is the conclusion which he impresses upon them: Nature is full of mystery; wonder not at moral mysteries in life. This is the substance of Jehovah's reply to Job and his friends: —

"I will ask thee; and inform me thou.
Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth?
Declare if by knowledge thou understandest.
. . . . . .
Hast thou comprehended the breadths of the earth?
Tell if thou knowest it all.
. . . . . .
Hast thou visited the treasuries of the snow?
And the treasuries of hail hast thou seen them, —
Which I have reserved for the day of distress?
. . . . . .
Wilt thou even disannul my right?
Wilt thou condemn me, that thou mayest be justified?" [2]

[1] 1 Cor. xiii. 12, 13.

[2] Job xxxviii. 3, 4, 18, 22, 24; xl. 8. John Owen sums up the argument very effectively: "If it be granted that all the operations of nature and creation which man sees about him are inexplicable, may not a similar unsearchableness, *ex natura rerum*, per-

To attempt to epitomize the sublime chapters which close this poem and in which this lesson is illustrated and enforced would be hopeless. The reader must turn to his Revised Version of the Bible and read these chapters for himself. Let him not, however, fail to note that God condemns the three friends whose sophisticated arguments have falsified the facts of life in their special pleading for him, — rather let us say for their own theology which they have confounded with him, — and commends Job in spite of his apparently audacious irreverence. The poet does not leave us in doubt whether his sympathies are with Job or with his three friends.

"Jehovah said to Eliphaz the Temanite, My wrath is kindled against thee, and against thy two friends: for ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right as my servant Job hath." [1]

The epilogue, in which seven sons and three daughters were restored to Job as though they were raised from the dead, and in which all his property is doubled, does not here concern us, except that it constitutes a conclusive demonstration that in this book we have presented to us a drama, not a history.

tain to God's dealings with men? If Job cannot see whence comes the rain or determine beforehand the path of the lightning, may not a similar inability extend to others of the divine operations in which man's welfare is more especially concerned?" *Five Great Skeptical Dramas*, p. 154. Mr. Owen's entire treatment of Job, and especially his comparison of it with the *Prometheus Bound*, is very suggestive.

[1] Job xlii. 7.

There is a philosophy called Utilitarianism: the popular though crude expression of which is found in the phrase, Be virtuous and you will be happy. The Book of Job brings this philosophy to the test of life: he is virtuous and he is not happy. There is a philosophy called Naturalism: it assumes that neither is there any divine revelation nor any need of one. The Book of Job brings this philosophy to the test of life: in sorrow the light of nature proves to be a great darkness. There is a philosophy called Agnosticism: it assumes that God and the future life must remain forever unknown to us. The Book of Job does not answer this philosophy; but it interprets the anguish of the soul in this ignorance by the cry, "Oh that I knew where I might find him!" Centuries must pass before the Great Unknown of the captivity will bring his message to Israel that only by the Suffering Servant of Jehovah can Israel be saved; more centuries, before the Nazarene will take up his cross and bid his followers take up theirs and enter into glory through crucifixion; before his great Apostle will declare that he glories in tribulation also; before his beloved disciple will give the world the vision of the saints of God redeemed and redeeming by means of great tribulation; and many more centuries, it seems, must pass before the world can understand the lesson, learned so slowly and with such difficulty, that suffering is not punitive but redemptive. "In the world," said Christ, "ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have

overcome the world." [1] In the book of Job we see the tribulation of an honest heart uncheered by this promise of victory. "I am persuaded," said Paul, "that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate me from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." [2] In the Book of Job we see the devout and honest soul struggling to hold fast to the love of God which life is trying to wrest from him, and which has not been authenticated to him by the love and life and death of Jesus Christ.

For in the Book of Job the problem of the ages is portrayed in microcosm; the problem of suffering as it has presented itself in all ages to sincere souls, conscious of their innocence and not conscious of that call to service through sacrifice which the life and passion of Jesus Christ has made vocal to all the world. In this ancient drama the spiritual tragedy of all the ages is interpreted. In it is the audacious challenge to life of a William Ernest Henley: —

> "In the fell clutch of circumstance
> I have not winced nor cried aloud;
> Under the bludgeonings of chance
> My head is bloody, but unbowed." [3]

In it is the pathetic counter-pleading against life of a Matthew Arnold: —

[1] John xvi. 33. [2] Rom. viii. 38, 39.
[3] *Life and Death* (*Echoes*), iv.

"Let us be true
To one another! for the world, which seems
To lie before us like a land of dreams,
So various, so beautiful, so new,
Hath really neither joy, nor love, nor light,
Nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for pain;
And we are here as on a darkling plain
Swept with confused alarms of struggle and flight,
Where ignorant armies clash by night."[1]

And by it we are conducted to the conclusion of Alfred Tennyson: —

"Our little systems have their day;
They have their day and cease to be:
They are but broken lights of thee,
And thou, O Lord, art more than they.

"We have but faith: we cannot know;
For knowledge is of things we see;
And yet we trust it comes from thee,
A beam in darkness: let it grow."[2]

"We cannot know:" this is the conclusion of the Book of Job; let us be humble and patient, do our duty, be true to one another, and wait for the solution of life's mystery. Let us realize that character, not happiness, is the end of life, and that if we do not serve God for naught we do not serve him at all. Let us not aggravate the sufferings of life by predicating their injustice; nor sacrifice our loyalty to truth in our endeavor to prove that loyalty to God is reasonable.

[1] *Dover Beach; Poems*, 211.
[2] *In Memoriam.*

CHAPTER XI

A SCHOOL OF ETHICAL PHILOSOPHY — I

Moral teachers may be divided into three classes, which may be respectively termed the empirical, the legal, and the prophetic. The empirical teacher observes life, and from his observations deduces certain moral maxims. He perceives that certain courses of conduct produce happiness, — these he calls right; certain other courses of conduct produce pain, — these he calls wrong. He measures conduct by its results, and deduces the principles of moral action from his observation of such results. These principles find their most common and popular expression in such maxims as "Honesty is the best policy;" they are based upon experience and observation; they are often, though by no means always, purely prudential; they are more apt to be rules than principles; and they constitute rather a series of practical maxims than a system of theoretical ethics. The legalist is not content with these results. He carries his researches further, or thinks that he does so. From his observation and experience, he deduces certain laws of life, or he accepts such laws as promulgated by some authority, human or divine. These laws of life some-

times derive their authority solely from observation of their results; sometimes added authority is given to them by their promulgation by the Church or the State; often it is maintained that they are derived directly or indirectly from God or the gods, in which case the supreme authority of a divine lawgiver is claimed for them. Virtue consists, according to this school, in obedience to law, human or divine; and this obedience is to be rendered regardless of possible or probable results; for virtue consists in doing what is commanded, not in doing merely what appears to be beneficial. The prophetic teacher is not satisfied to stop with the discovery of a law, whether that law is human or divine. He asks, Why has this law been promulgated? why has the Church or the State forbidden or commanded? why has God forbidden or commanded? And his reply to this inquiry is not derived from any observation of the effects of obedience or disobedience. Virtue he regards not as a means to happiness as an end; it is itself the end. It is to be pursued whether it is commanded or forbidden; whether it produces pleasure or pain. The prophetic teacher does not think that certain conduct is righteous because it produces happiness, though he believes that generally happiness follows from virtue; he does not think that it is righteous because it is commanded, but that it is commanded because it is righteous. Law he regards as inherent in the nature: the laws of the material universe are the nature of matter and force; the laws of

health are the nature of the body; the laws of God are the nature of God; and these are also the laws of man because man is made in the image of God. The authority of law is from within; law is inherent, eternal, immutable. God is righteous and his commands are righteous, but righteousness is not created by the commands which define and interpret it; the careful observation of life confirms the practical wisdom of righteousness in all its various applications, but righteousness does not depend on the results which proceed from it. The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews has given an ancient prophet's utterance of this view in the phrase "it is impossible for God to lie." F. W. Faber has given a modern prophet's utterance of it in the verse, —

> "For right is right, since God is God;
> And right the day must win:
> To doubt would be disloyalty,
> To falter would be sin."

The moralists of the eighteenth century and the stoics of the first century may be regarded as a type of the first school; the Puritans of the seventeenth century and the nobler spirits among the Pharisees of the first century may be regarded as a type of the second; the mystics of all ages and the Hebrew prophets of the period before and during the exile may be regarded as a type of the third.

Often these schools are critical of and antagonistic to each other. The empiric condemns the

legalist as dogmatic, and the prophet as vague and mystical; the legalist condemns the empiric as unauthoritative and unscientific, and the prophet as unauthoritative and mystical; and the prophetic teacher condemns the empiric as one who substitutes prudence for virtue, and the legalist as one who substitutes the obedience of fear for the spontaneous life of love. Yet they are not necessarily antagonistic except as they are made mutually exclusive. The religious teacher may believe with the prophet that righteousness is inherent in the nature of God; with the legalist that law is more than a principle, it is also the expression of the righteous will of a righteous God; and with the empiric that the observation and experience of life interpret and confirm the intuitive moral perception of these divine embodiments of this eternal principle. The greatest teachers combine the three methods of ascertaining, interpreting, and confirming moral truth. When in the Sermon on the Mount Christ gives to his disciples the counsel, "Agree with thine adversary quickly whiles thou art in the way with him; lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison," he commends the pacific disposition by a purely prudential motive derived from an observation of the facts of life;[1] when he says: "I say

[1] "Lest the adversary deliver thee to the judge." "This part is explained by some in a metaphorical sense, that the Heavenly Judge will act toward us with the utmost rigor, so as to forgive

unto you, "Swear not at all; neither by heaven, for it is God's throne; nor by the earth, for it is his footstool; neither by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the Great King," he promulgates a definite law, and bases it not on the experience of life, but on the authority of the conscience and the reason interpreting the laws of God; and when he says, "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you, that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven," he enunciates a divine principle of righteousness which inheres in the nature of God, and of man as the child of God, made in God's image, dependent for its authority neither on the results which it produces, nor on the will of the lawgiver who formulates it, but on its own inherent, eternal, absolute rightfulness.

All three of these voices, that of the empiric, that of the legalist, and that of the prophet or intuitionalist, are found in the Old Testament. The Book of Job may be taken as the voice of the prophet. Job will pay no reverence to Jehovah if Jehovah be not righteous. Righteousness of character, that is, conformity to the eternal principles

us nothing, if we do not labor to settle those differences which we have with our neighbors. But I view it more simply, as an admonition that, even among men, it is usually advantageous for us to come to an early agreement with adversaries, because, with quarrelsome persons, their obstinacy often costs them dear." *Commentary on a Harmony of the Evangelists, Matthew, Mark, and Luke*, by John Calvin, vol. i. p. 288.

of justice, is the only ground of authority which he will recognize. The Hebrew code may be regarded as the voice of the legalist: its message is summed up in the words, "If ye will obey my voice and keep my covenant, then shall ye be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people:" all virtue is summed up in obedience to a supreme, a divine King. The voice of the empiric, who derives moral maxims from an observation of life, and commends them by their practical results as seen in life, is chiefly interpreted in two books, — the Book of Proverbs and the Book of Ecclesiastes. As the Levitical code is the expression of the religious life as interpreted by the priesthood; as the Deuteronomic code is the expression of that life as interpreted by the statesmen; as the Book of Psalms is the expression of that life as interpreted by the lyric poets; as the Books of Amos, Hosea, Micah, and Isaiah are perhaps the sublimest expression of that life as interpreted by the intuitionalists or prophets, so the Books of Proverbs and of Ecclesiastes are the expression of that life as interpreted by the Wise Men.[1] These Wise Men constituted no order, as did the priests; they did not profess to have received a special divine call, as did the prophets; rarely if ever do they claim to speak in the name or on behalf of Jehovah; but they did constitute an unorganized and

[1] For an excellent account of this school see *The Wise Men of Ancient Israel and their Proverbs*, by C. T. Kent, Ph. D., pp. 17–31.

undefined school of thought; their analogue in our times is to be found in the equally inorganic School of Ethical Culture.

Proverbs are the coined experience of a people. The maker of a proverb is not one who has seen deeply into the inward nature of things; he is not a poet, nor one who has a clear apprehension of great laws; he is not a philosopher: the maker of a proverb is one who has a keen observation of the actual phenomena of life, and has been able to put the result of his observation into a single sentence so that it flashes light like a diamond. The Book of Proverbs is the experience of the Hebrew people coined into current aphorisms by men of native wit. These proverbs are not written by men of remarkable spiritual vision; nor by men notable for their clear vision of great laws, whether discovered by philosophical inquiry or divinely revealed; they are aphorisms which have been struck out of human experience by the attrition of life, have received concise interpretation in compact sentences, and have passed current among the people. Such a book can have no author; rather it has many authors, though it may have one editor. No man can with deliberate purpose sit down to write proverbs. One man once made the endeavor, but since Martin Farquar Tupper's "Proverbial Philosophy" no man has repeated the experiment. The book is called in our Bible "The Proverbs of Solomon," not because he wrote them, nor because he gathered them together, but because he was one

of the first men of the Hebrew nation to take this utilitarian, this prudential, this ethical-culture view of life and put it into proverbs. He was perhaps the very first; others, inspired by his thinking, produced other proverbs; these were from time to time gathered into various collections, and these various collections were finally brought together in the general collection now known as the Book of Proverbs.

There is therefore in this book no unity.[1] It is simply a collection of aphorisms which have been formulated by the wise moralists among the Hebrews and which have passed current in the Hebrew nation. This character of the book is indicated by its title-page: —

"The proverbs of Solomon, the son of David, king of Israel; To know wisdom and instruction; to perceive the words of understanding; To receive the instruction of wisdom, justice, and judgment, and equity; To give subtilty to the simple, to the young man knowledge and discretion. A wise man will hear, and will increase learning; and a man of understanding shall attain unto wise counsels; To understand a proverb, and the interpretation: the words of the wise, and their dark sayings."[2]

[1] For an admirable presentation of the Proverbs as collections of collections and in their different literary form as sonnets, riddles, separate aphorisms, etc., see *The Modern Reader's Bible:* The Proverbs, by R. G. Moulton. For an elaborate interpretation of the book from the other point of view, as spiritual and prophetic, and in a sense Messianic, see *A Commentary on the Proverbs with a New Translation*, by John Miller.

[2] Prov. i. 1–6.

Here is not a word said about the law of God, nor about revelation from him. The object of the book is simply to give practical wisdom by giving practical understanding of the experiences of life. As such it is to be read.

We are not, then, to look in the Book of Proverbs for a system of philosophy or theology. Theology is the science of religion, and the Book of Proverbs is not scientific. It contains no religious creed, and nothing suggesting one; no ethical system and no hint that any such system was in the mind of the authors or the editor. It contains no hint of what are called the great doctrines of Christianity, such as trinity, revelation, inspiration, divine sovereignty, and the like; no systematic counsels for the conduct of life, such as we find in the Sermon on the Mount. Separated instructions, fragments of wisdom, coined results of experience, — these are what are presented, and without system, deliberately and intentionally without system. The book never refers to Israel as the chosen people of God; contains no suggestion of a coming Messiah, — the great hope of Israel; and no revelation of the immortality of the soul. It contains five incidental references to sacrifices;[1] but none to Temple or Tabernacle or priesthood or Levitical code; and none to the Mosaic moral code. Its reference to the law is to the moral law as interpreted by the reason and the conscience; its sanctions are in the main found, not in any supreme obligation to obey

[1] Prov. vii. 14; xv. 8; xvii. 1; xxi. 3, 27.

Jehovah, but in the consequences which follow in this life, upon obedience and disobedience, that is, upon temporal and prudential considerations.

The contrast between the prophetic and the proverbial method in the treatment of life is brought out clearly by the contrast between two poems covering the same ground, — one in the Book of Psalms, the other in the Book of Proverbs. They might well be given the same title, "The Two Paths." The poet's description of the two paths in the First Psalm is as follows : —

"Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the wicked,
Nor standeth in the way of sinners,
Nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.
But his delight is in the law of the LORD ;
And in his law doth he meditate day and night.
And he shall be like a tree planted by the streams of water,
That bringeth forth its fruit in its season,
Whose leaf also doth not wither;
And whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.
The wicked are not so ;
But are like the chaff which the wind driveth away.
Therefore the wicked shall not stand in the judgment,
Nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.
For the LORD knoweth the way of the righteous :
But the way of the wicked shall perish."

That is a poet's interpretation of life, figurative in phraseology, ideal in spirit, written by one whose conception of life is derived from his conception of what life ought to be because his faith in a just God makes him sure that what ought to be will be. The other poem on the two paths, in the fourth chapter of Proverbs beginning at the tenth verse, reads as follows : —

"Hear, O my son, and receive my sayings;
And the years of thy life shall be many.
I have taught thee in the way of wisdom;
I have led thee in paths of uprightness.
When thou goest, thy steps shall not be straitened;
And if thou runnest, thou shalt not stumble.
Take fast hold of instruction; let her not go:
Keep her; for she is thy life.
Enter not into the path of the wicked,
And walk not in the way of evil men.
Avoid it, pass not by it;
Turn from it, and pass on.
For they sleep not, except they have done mischief;
And their sleep is taken away, unless they cause some to fall.
For they eat the bread of wickedness,
And drink the wine of violence.
But the path of the righteous is as the shining light,
That shineth more and more unto the perfect day.
The way of the wicked is as darkness:
They know not at what they stumble."

Here there is no figurative language: no tree growing beside the still waters, no leaf not withering, no chaff blown away by the wind; all is plain, simple, prosaic, — a description of life as the author has actually seen it.

This view of the Book of Proverbs is important, because a very different interpretation has often been given to the book, and a misunderstanding has resulted therefrom. Men have taken this book as though it were written by prophets; as though it contained a system of theology; as though it even embodied a prophetic revelation of the law and the Gospels of the New Testament; instead of being what it is, simply a mirror held up to human life. Many readers will probably recall

sermons preached upon the following passage as though it were a portraiture of God's treatment of the too-late repentant sinner: —

"How long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity?
And scorners delight them in scorning,
And fools hate knowledge?
Turn you at my reproof:
Behold, I will pour out my spirit unto you,
I will make known my words unto you.
Because I have called, and ye refused;
I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded;
But ye have set at nought all my counsel,
And would none of my reproof:
I also will laugh in the day of your calamity;
I will mock when your fear cometh;
When your fear cometh as a storm,
And your calamity cometh on as a whirlwind;
When distress and anguish come upon you.
Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer;
They shall seek me diligently, but they shall not find me."[1]

Who is speaking? Jehovah? The God who sent his own Son into the world that he might save men who rejected him? The God depicted in the parable of the prodigal son as coming forth to meet the boy who has thrown away his life, and by ungrudging mercy to bring him back to manhood again? Is it this Father who says, "I will laugh at their calamity, . . . they shall call upon me, but I will not answer?" No! not Jehovah! — wisdom! This is a picture of life as the author has actually seen it, as we have all seen it. The young man had wise counsels; he was told that if he went on in his present career he would bring evil on him-

[1] Prov. i. 22–28.

self. But he was headstrong, he was wiser than his father, he would take his own course, he has taken it, he has ruined himself, he is dishonored and disgraced in his own eyes and in the eyes of all men. And now these counsels of the past come flocking about him like ghosts, taunting him and saying to him, I told you so. His father may not say so; his mother may not say so; if they are wise, they will not, but life says so. And then, while all these ghosts of the wisdom of the past are repeating to him the story of his folly, while they are scourging him with whips like scorpions, then comes to him the voice of Jehovah as it is interpreted by the idealist: —

"Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near; let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." [1]

The reason for the difference between the first chapter of Proverbs and the fifty-fifth chapter of Isaiah is that the writer of Proverbs shows forth the thoughts of man, while the prophet shows forth the thoughts of God, and God's thoughts are not our thoughts, neither are his ways our ways. And when this experience of our own folly rises

[1] Isa. lv. 6–9.

up to taunt us, this voice of divine forgiveness summons us from ourselves to him; the answer to Proverbs is in Isaiah; the refuge from the mocking voice of human wisdom is turning from ourselves to him whose ways are higher than our ways and his thoughts than our thoughts.

The Book of Proverbs contains a great number of single aphorisms. It is in vain to look for any connection between them, for there is no connection. They are not even classified according to subjects. They cover a large range of human experience. They are observant, shrewd, keen-edged, often humorous, more often satirical. "The Proverbs," says Professor W. J. Beecher of Auburn Theological Seminary,[1] "are remarkably rich in humor, though this is a fact which most readers fail to appreciate, by reason of our accustomed solemn way of looking at everything in the Bible;" a sentence worth consideration by those who think it irreverent to find occasion for merriment in a book which explicitly declares that "a merry heart is a good medicine."[2] Three examples of this humor will suffice to illustrate this characteristic of the collection.

> "Confidence in an unfaithful man in time of trouble
> Is a broken tooth and a foot out of joint."[3]

You relied on your tooth to feed you; it is

[1] *The Bible as Literature*, p. 119. The chapter in this volume on the Wisdom Literature by Professor Beecher is an admirable sketch of its salient characteristics.

[2] Prov. xvii. 22. Compare xv. 13, 15.

[3] Prov. xxv. 19.

broken, and every movement gives you a twinge of pain; you relied on your foot to carry you; at every step you limp, or you halt altogether. Such is the friend you relied upon to stand by you in trouble and who when the trouble came left you in the lurch.

"He that passeth by and vexeth himself with strife belonging not to him
Is like one that taketh a dog by the ears." [1]

Why? Because when one has once gotten an ugly dog by the ears one cannot let go. Analogous to this is the Chinese proverb: "Riding the tiger — hard riding, but you cannot get off."

"A continual dropping in a very rainy day
And a contentious woman are alike:
He that would restrain her restraineth the wind,
And his right hand encountereth oil." [2]

He cannot stop her; and if he tries to do it, she slips out from under him and begins again in the same strain.

But this Book of Proverbs contains not only single aphorisms; it also contains odes, sonnets, riddles, life portraits: in one respect only like the single aphorisms, — they are drawn from the observation and experience of life.

RIDDLES.

"For three things the earth doth tremble,
And for four things which it cannot bear."

What are they?

[1] Prov. xxvi. 17. [2] Prov. xxvii. 15, 16.

"For a servant when he is king;
And a fool when he is filled with meat;
For an odious woman when she is married;
And for an handmaid that is heir to her mistress." [1]

"There be four things which are little upon the earth,
But they are exceeding wise."

What are they?

"The ants are a people not strong;
Yet they provide their meat in the summer;
The conies are but a feeble folk,
Yet make they their houses in the rocks;
The locusts have no king,
Yet they go forth all of them by bands;
The lizard thou canst seize with thy hands,
Yet is she in kings' palaces." [2]

These hardly seem to us like riddles, but they have the same quality: a question or comparison; the answer concealed for a moment, and then given.

There are Meissonier pictures: minute, graphic, realistic, unromantic, unimaginative, — pictures drawn not by Fancy, but by Observation.

THE PROSPEROUS FARMER.

"Be thou diligent to know the state of thy flocks,
And look well to thy herds:
For riches are not forever;
And doth the crown endure unto all generations?
The hay is carried,
And the tender grass showeth itself,
And the herbs of the mountains are gathered in.
The lambs are for thy clothing,
And the goats for the price of the field:
And there will be goats' milk enough for thy food,
For the food of thy household;
And maintenance for thy maidens." [3]

[1] Prov. xxx. 21–23. [2] Prov. xxx. 24–28.
[3] Prov. xxvii. 23–27. For other illustrations of this pictorial

With it contrast: —

THE UNPROSPEROUS FARMER.

"I went by the field of the slothful,
And by the vineyard of the man void of understanding;
And, lo, it was all grown over with thorns,
And the face thereof was covered with nettles,
And the stone wall thereof was broken down.
Then I beheld, and considered well:
I saw, and received instruction.
Yet a little sleep, a little slumber,
A little folding of the hands to sleep:
So shall thy poverty come as a robber;
And thy want as an armed man." [1]

Not only there is no theology in the Book of Proverbs, that is, no system of divine truth; there is also no ethical system; truth is not taught in a system. But the ethical standard is high. "Its maxims," says Professor Toy, "all look to the establishment of a safe, peaceful, happy social life in the family and the community." [2] These proverbs commend the common virtues, and denounce or satirize the common vices of mankind, but they do not bring to bear upon the reader the highest

realism, see The Tippler, chapter xxiii. 24–35, and The Virtuous Woman, chapter xxxi. 10–31.

[1] Prov. xxiv. 30–34.

[2] Professor Toy deduces a very simple theology from the Book of Proverbs, but it is avowedly his deduction from the book, not the deduction from life by the author or editor of the book. This theology includes the following: Monotheism is taken for granted; sin is the violation of law; salvation, which is deliverance from earthly evil, is secured by obedience to law; there is no judgment after death, and the future of men in Sheol has no relation to moral character. *The International Critical Commentary:* The Book of Proverbs, by Crawford H. Toy, Introduction, pp. xv., xvi.

motives; they do not urge obligation to obey law because it is the law of God, nor because it is absolutely and eternally just and right, nor even because it promotes the general welfare; but because obedience will promote the well-being of the obedient. The spirit of the book is not idealistic; not that of loyalty to Jehovah, nor that of obedience to conscience, nor that of regard for others; it is prudential. The book never antagonizes the higher motives; it is entirely consistent with them; but it does not appeal to them. It deals with the relations of man to his fellow man, it deduces the maxims respecting these relations from experience of life, not from a revealed will of God, nor from an inward witness of the conscience. The maxims which it thus commends are consonant with those which law as interpreted by the legalist and life as interpreted by the idealist commend; but it does not formulate any great principles or laws of moral life; it is a book of maxims based upon experience.

In general the basis of these maxims is universal experience. In this respect Hebrew proverbs are unlike those of other nationalities. Proverbs, being based on experience, are often provincial in tone; they take on their form, if they do not derive their ethical character, from the peculiar circumstances of the nation which has given them birth. Thus it is Germany, land of the Reformation, that coins the proverb, "God's friend is the priest's foe;" Germany, the land that abounds with beer, that produces the proverb, "More men

are drowned in the bowl than are drowned in the sea;" and it is in Germany, which requires a new discovery in order to confer a Ph. D., that the people have coined the proverb, "Always something new, seldom something good." We cross the border and come into Italy; it is in Italy, land of the bandits, that the proverb appears, "To him who can take what thou hast, give what he asks;" it is Italy, land of the siesta, that coins the proverb, "First get a good name, then go to sleep;" it is Italy, land of treachery, poisons, and assassinations, that coins the proverbs, "Even woods have ears" and "Even among the Apostles there was a Judas." Cross the border again and come into France; it is France, one of whose writers said that England had twenty religions and only one sauce, that coins the proverb, "For wolf's flesh, dog sauce;" France, where men rarely go to church and still more rarely absent themselves from the table, that coins the proverb, "A short mass and a long dinner." In Holland, sturdy land of thrift, the proverbs appear, "Perseverance brings success;" "Every day a thread makes a skein in the year;" "Biding makes thriving." In Armenia, where no man knows whether what he owns belongs to him or not, the proverb is coined, "He feeds the hen with one hand, and takes her egg with the other;" in Armenia, where men have lived long under the terror of the Turk, appears the proverb, "The wolf knows no reckoning;" in Armenia, land of dishonesty because of

cruelty under oppression, runs the proverb, "I do not want it, put it in my pocket." This provincial character of proverbs receives striking illustration in the transformation which proverbs sometimes undergo in passing from one country to another. Thus the English proverb, "A May flood never did good" becomes in southern Spain and Italy "Water in May is bread for all the year;" and the English proverb "Dry August and warm does harvest no harm" is converted in Spain into "When it rains in August it rains honey and wine."

In the Hebrew proverbs there is nothing provincial and little or nothing distinctively Hebraic. They seem to belong neither to the race nor to the age, but to be expressions of a universal experience. Literature is the expression of life: therefore the greater the life expressed, the greater the literature. The essay, poem, or drama which represents simply a provincial and temporary phase of life, in a provincial dialect, belongs to the lowest class; that which represents the characteristic life of its age belongs in the second class; that which represents universal experience, that of all men in all ages, — a Homer, a Dante, a Shakespeare, — belongs in the highest class. It is one characteristic of the proverbs of the Hebrew people that they are expressions of universal experience, applicable to America in the twentieth century scarcely less than to the Hebrew people in the fifth century before Christ.

There is no cynicism in the Hebrew proverbs. The Hebrew satirizes the unfaithful friend, but his experience of a friend's unfaithfulness does not make him skeptical concerning friendship. Contrast with the cynical proverb of the French: "God save me from the friends I trust in," or of the Spanish, "A reconciled friend is a double enemy," with the carefully defined comparison of an *unfaithful* friend to a broken tooth. The Hebrew satirizes the contentious woman, but nowhere does he treat woman with the cynical contempt of Pope: "Every woman is at heart a rake;" nowhere do we find in this collection of Hebrew proverbs the contempt for woman's intelligence expressed in the old English proverb "When an ass climbs a ladder one may find wisdom in women." On the contrary, it would be difficult to find in literature a more appreciative portraiture of the faithful housewife than in the last chapter of Proverbs; I say *housewife*, for the portrait is not, and does not profess to be, an ideal; there are no ideals in the Book of Proverbs; it is a realistic picture of an industrious woman at her housewifely work for her husband and her children; not a "Dream of Fair Women," not a Raphael's Madonna, but a Dutch artist's photographic reproduction from daily life, a Mrs. Primrose in the "Vicar of Wakefield"; common, prosaic, realistic, but not cynical. Nowhere in the Book of Proverbs do we find aphorisms analogous to these taken, almost at random, from modern collections: —

"We all have strength enough to bear other people's troubles."

"The poorhouses are filled with the honestest people."

"The worst pig gets the best acorn."

"No camel ever sees his own hump."

"Gratitude is a lively sense of favors to come."

"Repentance is fear of ill yet to come upon us."

"Love of justice is the fear of suffering injustice."

"The public! How many fools does it take to make the public?"

"Celebrity is the advantage of being known to people who do not know you."

Cynicism involves contempt for man and generally contempt for the common virtues, and neither contempt for man nor contempt for the common virtues is to be found in the Book of Proverbs. Even the satire of the Hebrew Proverbs is a kindly satire; they are pervaded by a spirit of cheerfulness and good-fellowship; they are keyed to a high standard of ethics; among them are maxims which in their spirit suggest, though they do not equal, those of the New Testament. Compare, for example, these counsels of the Hebrew wise men with the later counsel of Christ. They are almost identical, not only in the advice given, but in the prudential foundation on which the advice is based.

THE HEBREW WISE MAN.

"Put not thyself forward in the presence of the king
And stand not in the place of great men:
For better it is that it be said unto thee, Come up hither;

Than that thou shouldest be put lower in the presence of the prince,
Whom thine eyes have seen." [1]

CHRIST.

"When thou art bidden of any man to a wedding, sit not down in the highest room, lest a more honorable man than thou be bidden of him. And he that bade thee and him come and say to thee, Give this man place; and thou begin with shame to take the lowest room. But when thou art bidden, go and sit down in the lowest room; that when he that bade thee cometh, he may say unto thee, Friend, go up higher; then shalt thou have worship in the presence of them that sit at meat with thee." [2]

Or again compare the ethical instruction of Paul with that of the Book of Proverbs from which he quotes it: —

PROVERBS.

"If thine enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat;
And if he be thirsty, give him water to drink:
For thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head,
And the LORD shall reward thee." [3]

PAUL.

"Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. Therefore, if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head." [4]

[1] Prov. xxv. 6, 7.
[2] Luke xiv. 8–10.
[3] Prov. xxv. 21, 22.
[4] Rom. xii. 20.

The counsel is the same; but the Wise Man in the Proverbs promises a reward to those who follow it; Paul promises nothing; and Christ who calls to his followers to give a like treatment to their enemies, summons to love as well as to service, and for motive appeals to the highest aspiration of the soul: "That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven." [1]

God speaks to us with many voices. To men whose conscience is alert he speaks through law, saying: "I am the Lord thy God; thou shalt have no other gods before me;" to the men whose imagination is receptive he speaks through poetry, declaring that in his temple everything saith "Glory;" to the man of broad observation he speaks in history, showing in the course of Israel's history how Jehovah is revealed in his dealing with the sons of men; to the man who is a ceremonialist he speaks through the Levitical code, pointing out justice on the one hand and mercy on the other; and to the man whose horizon is limited by this world, who has no clear hope beyond the grave and no clear vision of the Eternal Father, he speaks through the Book of Proverbs, saying in effect: If there were no God, and if there were no life to come, still sin would be folly and virtue would be wisdom.

[1] Matt. v. 43–48.

CHAPTER XII

A SCHOOL OF ETHICAL PHILOSOPHY — II

THE Book of Ecclesiastes is like the Book of Proverbs in that it is an interpretation of life from the point of view of experience;[1] it differs from

[1] The difficulties which attend the interpretation of the Book of Ecclesiastes are illustrated by the following summary of opinions which have been expressed respecting it by different scholars: "We are positively assured that the book contains the holy lamentations of Solomon, together with a prophetic vision of the splitting up of the royal house of David, the destruction of the temple, and the captivity; and we are equally assured that it is a discussion between a refined sensualist and a sober sage. Solomon publishes it in his repentance, to glorify God and to strengthen his brethren; he wrote it when he was irreligious and skeptical during his amours and idolatry. The Messiah, the true Solomon, who was known by the title of son of David, addresses this book to the saints; a profligate who wanted to disseminate his infamous sentiments palmed it upon Solomon. It teaches us to despise the world with all its pleasures and flee to monasteries; it shows that sensual gratifications are men's greatest blessing upon earth. It is a philosophic lecture delivered to a literary society upon topics of the greatest moment; it is a medley of heterogeneous fragments belonging to various authors and different ages. It describes the beautiful order of God's moral government, showing that all things work together for good to them that love the Lord; it proves that all is disorder and confusion and that the world is the sport of chance. It is a treatise on the summum bonum; it is a chronicle of the lives of the kings of the house of David from Solomon down to Zedekiah. Its object is to prove the immortality of the soul; its design is to deny a future exist-

the Book of Proverbs in that it is by a single author, who interprets life chiefly from the point of view of a single experience, that of King Solomon.

All modern or literary students of the Bible are agreed that Solomon is not the author of the book.[1] The fact that in its title-page [2] authorship is attributed to "the Preacher, the Son of David, King in Jerusalem," is not conclusive. That cer-

ence. Its aim is to comfort the unhappy Jews in their misfortunes; and its sole purport is to pour forth the gloomy imaginations of a melancholy misanthrope. It is intended to 'open Nathan's speech (1 Chron. xviii.) touching the eternal throne of David,' and it propounds by anticipation the modern discoveries of anatomy and the Harveian theory of the circulation of the blood. It foretells what will become of man or angels to eternity, and, according to one of the latest and greatest authorities, it is a keen satire on Herod, written 8 B. C., when the king cast his son Alexander into prison." C. D. Ginsburg: *Encyclopedia Britannica*, article Ecclesiastes. The student will find the material for a careful study of the Book of Ecclesiastes in Dr. Samuel Cox's Commentary on Ecclesiastes, *Expositor's Bible;* in Dean Plumptre on Ecclesiastes, *The Cambridge Bible;* in Professor Moulton's view of Ecclesiastes as given in the *Modern Reader's Bible;* and in Dean Stanley's interpretation of Ecclesiastes in his *Lectures on the Jewish Church*, vol. ii. pp. 282–287.

[1] For a clear statement of the grounds on which this consideration is based see Professor Moulton's *Modern Reader's Bible*, Ecclesiastes, Introduction, § 1; Plumptre's Commentary on Ecclesiastes, *The Cambridge Bible*, Introduction, pp. 19–34; Driver's *Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament*, pp. 465–478. The arguments are chiefly two: first, that the language and style are not those of the Solomonic era; second, that Solomon's reign was one of great material prosperity, while the Book of Ecclesiastes assumes a condition of national adversity under cruel foreign oppression.

[2] Eccles. i. 1.

tainly means Solomon; but in all ages it has been customary for men to write in the name of some other character, real or fictitious. Such writing is not fraudulent, unless the object of the writer is to palm off a false name upon his readers in order to secure for his writing a false authority. In this case there certainly is no such endeavor by the author to secure divine authority for his book, for the experience portrayed is anything but a divine experience. No one charges Robert Browning with fraud because in the "Death in the Desert" he puts his own sentiments into the mouth of the dying Apostle John. In some such manner a poet, probably of the fourth century before Christ, took Solomon as a vehicle for the expression of a certain interpretation of life. But though Solomon did not write this prose-poem, in interpreting it we may make use of our knowledge of Solomon, as our understanding of the character of King John will help us to understand Shakespeare's play of that name. What sort of character, then, was Solomon, and what sort of experience of life would a poet attribute to him?

Solomon, more than any other man in Old Testament history, represents that complexity of character which Paul has so graphically described in the seventh chapter of Romans. He was brought up by religious parents; had a religious training; was familiar with the law of God and with the ritual of the Temple; his conscience was educated by the law, his reverence by the ritual. But when

he came to full age and the possession of power and wealth he departed from his religious training and became the great sensualist of Israelitish history. The description of the splendor of his court, given in the Books of Kings and Chronicles, is paralleled by the historical accounts of the analogously corrupt splendor of the reign of Louis XIV. in France. He built a magnificent palace; his throne was of ivory; his dishes were gold; silver, it is said, was nothing accounted of; he had all the sensual pleasures of an Oriental court, — men singers and women singers and dancers; he had a great retinue of servants; at his table, it is said, there were daily consumed thirty oxen, one hundred sheep, and quantities of game. The accuracy of the figures does not concern us; there is no reason to doubt the accuracy of the picture which they convey. He introduced the harem, and the sensual worship of pagan gods; and this latter carried with it, in both social and religious life, the imitation of pagan ideals. It was his ambition, not only to ape but to rival other contemporaneous empires. Yet with it all he maintained a certain intellectual glory. Trained in religion, possessing an educated conscience, and surrounding himself with a barbaric and sensual splendor, he was far famed for his wisdom. He was a coiner of proverbs; from his reign, apparently, dates the beginning of what is known as the Wisdom Literature of the Old Testament. When the Queen of Sheba, attracted by the fame of his splendor, came to see him, she

came, it is said, to try him with hard questions. What they were we are not told, but she was satisfied with the shrewdness of his answers. It is such a man as this, with these contradictory and conflicting elements, — a religious training, an educated conscience, a sensual and self-indulgent nature, and a philosophic mind dealing with the actualities of life and trying to understand the riddle of existence, — that the poet who wrote the Book of Ecclesiastes chose for his mouthpiece. He imagines Solomon musing over the problem of life; reflecting upon wealth, sensual pleasure, gratified ambition, philosophic wisdom, and what these bring; and while this meditative musing on the varied experiences of life is going on, there break in upon him from time to time the memory of his childhood's instruction, the sanctions of God's law, the protest of his own conscience, and reflections suggested by his faith in the righteousness of God and a future judgment.

Thus the Book of Ecclesiastes is a dramatic monologue portraying the complicated experiences of life; these voices are conflicting, but they portray the conflict of a single soul at war with itself. In this monologue the man is represented as arguing with himself; weighing the contrasted experiences of life over against one another.[1] A philoso-

[1] "As the Book of Job is couched in the form of a dramatic argument between the Patriarch and his friends, as the Song of Songs is a dramatic dialogue between the Lover and his Beloved One, so the Book of Ecclesiastes is a drama of a still more tragic

pher would take these problems in order; he would consider first the value of pleasure, then that of ambition, then that of wisdom, etc., and finally he would draw from this orderly and consecutive consideration a logical conclusion as to life's teaching. The interpreter of Ecclesiastes, translating it into an orderly and philosophical form, is obliged to do this. But the writer of Ecclesiastes is not a philosopher; he is a poet interpreting human experience. And it is not in such well ordered thinking our experiences are fashioned within us. On the con-

kind. It is an interchange of voices, higher and lower, mournful and joyful, within a single human soul. It is like the struggle between the two principles in the Epistle to the Romans. It is like the question and answer of the 'Two Voices' of our modern poet. It is like the perpetual strophe and antistrophe of Pascal's *Pensées*. But it is more complicated, more entangled, than any of these, in proportion as the circumstances from which it grows are more perplexing, as the character which it represents is vaster and grander, and more distracted. Every speculation and thought of the human heart is heard, and expressed, and recognized in turn. The conflicts which in other parts of the Bible are confined to a single verse or a single chapter are here expanded to a whole book." *The History of the Jewish Church*, by Arthur Penrhyn Stanley, D. D., Lecture xxviii. pp. 282, 283. — Dean Plumptre suggests another parallel to Ecclesiastes in the 144th sonnet of Shakespeare: —

> "Two loves I have of comfort and despair
> Which, like two spirits, do suggest me still.
> The better angel is a man right fair,
> The worser spirit a woman colored ill.
> To win me soon to hell, my female evil
> Tempteth my better angel from my side,
> And would corrupt my saint to be a devil,
> Wooing his purity with her foul pride."

Ecclesiastes, *The Cambridge Bible*, Introduction by E. H. Plumptre, D. D., p. 43.

trary, thoughts come tumultuously into our mind; they fight their battle out within our consciousness; ambition, sensuality, wisdom, conscience, — all contend for the mastery. There are no parliamentary laws in the human soul, and no one to keep order, — first one voice speaks, and then another; they shout against one another, they drown one another. Thus the Book of Ecclesiastes is deliberately and of intention confused, because it is the portrayal of the confused experiences of a soul divided against itself. This confusion is enhanced by one literary characteristic. The writer has told us, in the last chapter, that he has sought out proverbs; that is, ranged over literature to get apothegms that will throw light upon the problem which he is considering. These proverbs, familiar in his time, are inserted in the dramatic monologue; in our time they would be put in quotation marks, with a footnote to say where they had come from. But there were no quotation marks at that time, and the proverbs are incorporated in the body of the text. How much of the book is gathered from a wide range of literature and how much is original with the writer, we do not know; but at times there are literary breaks in the order which may fairly be attributed to quotations, more or less apt.

We are then to imagine a man with religious training, an educated conscience, an apostate life, who has tried the various phases of self-seeking, — sensuality, philosophy, ambition, — and has undertaken to transcribe the results of his experiences.

The product is a journal of fragments, in this respect analogous to Amiel's Journal. After an introduction giving general expression to his spirit of pessimistic fatalism, the poet records the experiences which wealth and self-indulgence bring. He pictures the king as throwing himself with a certain abandon into a life of self-indulgent luxury, and yet remaining, as it were, outside of himself, a spectator of himself, a self-student, his wisdom remaining with him, as he expresses it, that he may thus investigate and see what is the value of wealth and self-indulgence. He thus reports the result of this spiritual vivisection: —

"I said in mine heart, Go to now, I will prove thee with mirth; therefore enjoy pleasure: and, behold, this also was vanity. I said of laughter, It is mad: and of mirth, What doeth it? I searched in mine heart how to cheer my flesh with wine, mine heart yet guiding me with wisdom, and how to lay hold on folly, till I might see what it was good for the sons of men that they should do under the heaven all the days of their life. I made me great works; I builded me houses; I planted me vineyards; I made me gardens and parks, and I planted trees in them of all kinds of fruit: I made me pools of water, to water therefrom the forest where trees were reared: I bought men servants and maidens, and had servants born in my house; also I had great possessions of herds and flocks, above all that were before me and in Jerusalem: I gathered me also silver and gold and the peculiar treasure of kings and of the provinces: I gat me men singers and women singers, and the delights of the sons of men, concubines very

many. So I was great, and increased more than all that were before me in Jerusalem: also my wisdom remained with me. And whatsoever mine eyes desired I kept not from them: I withheld not my heart from any joy, for my heart rejoiced because of all my labor; and this was my portion from all my labor. Then I looked on all the works that my hands had wrought, and on the labor that I had labored to do; and behold, all was vanity and vexation of spirit, and there was no profit under the sun." [1]

The king is next portrayed as giving himself in a similar spirit to ambition, with a like reflection on the experiment while he is trying it; the result is the same: "What hath a man of all his labor, and of the striving of his heart wherein he laboreth under the sun? For all his days are but sorrows, and his travail is grief; yea even in the night his heart taketh no rest. This also is vanity." [2]

The preacher's experience of wealth, pleasure, ambition is much that which Lord Byron has expressed, imputing his interpretation to Childe Harold: —

"Years steal
Fire from the mind as vigor from the limb;
And life's enchanted cup but sparkles near the brim.

"His had been quaffed too quickly, and he found
The days were wormwood; but he filled again,
And from a purer fount, on holier ground,
And deemed its spring perpetual; but in vain!
Still round him clung invisibly a chain
Which gall'd for ever, fettering though unseen,

[1] Eccles. ii. 1-11. [2] Eccles. ii. 22, 23.

And heavy though it clanked not; worn with pain,
Which pined although it spoke not, and grew keen,
Entering with every step he took through many a scene."[1]

Next the king tries philosophy; the result is no better. The wise man is none the better off for all his thinking: for

"that which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts; even one thing befalleth them: as the one dieth, so dieth the other; yea, they have all one breath; and man hath no pre-eminence above the beasts: for all is vanity. All go unto one place; all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again."[2]

Wisdom, ambition, wealth, pleasure, all are vanity. It is useless to build houses and plant gardens and get men singers and women singers; useless to allow oneself to be inspired by a great ambition to attempt great things in the world, or to be incited by a great curiosity to understand life's mysteries; for nothing can be changed and nothing can be discovered; all is vanity of vanities. The poet's conclusion as to wisdom, "of making many books there is no end and much study is a weariness of the flesh," brings to mind that of the Persian poet, Omar Khayyám, as interpreted by Edward Fitzgerald: —

"Myself when young, did eagerly frequent
Doctor and Saint, and heard great argument
About it and about: but evermore
Came out by the same door as in I went."

[1] *Childe Harold:* Canto iii., stanzas viii. and ix.
[2] Eccles. iii. 19.

Next the king tries the golden mean: he proposes to take life as he finds it; to live day by day without ambition, without philosophy; to choose the middle path, the path of safety. He will try the plan of taking care of his own interests, but with some regard for his neighbor's property: —

"Two are better than one; because they have a good reward for their labor. For if they fail, the one will lift up his fellow; but woe to him that is alone when he falleth and hath not another to lift him up. Again, if two lie together, then they have warmth, but how can one be warm alone? And if a man prevail against him that is alone, two shall withstand him; and a threefold cord is not quickly broken." [1]

Combination is better than unregulated competition: not because love and service are higher than self-seeking, but because combination is a wiser kind of self-seeking. All excess fails: feasting is to be moderated by sympathy for the mourner, for "it is better to go to the house of mourning than to the house of feasting: for that is the end of all men; and the king will lay it to his heart." It is well to be righteous, but not too righteous; there is a golden mean between abandoning oneself unreservedly to self-indulgence and devoting oneself too heroically to virtue: —

"Be not righteous over much; neither make thyself over wise; why shouldest thou destroy thyself? Be not overmuch wicked, neither be thou foolish; why shouldest thou die before thy time?" [2]

[1] Eccles. iv. 9–12.

[2] Eccles. vii. 16, 17.

The satirical conclusion of the king may be stated thus: be as virtuous as the public opinion of your time requires; more than that is perilous; less than that is fatal. In the same spirit of keen satire Cardinal Newman has graphically described "the safe man:" —

"In the present day, mistiness is the mother of wisdom. A man who can set down a half a dozen general propositions, which escape from destroying one another only by being diluted into truisms, who can hold the balance between opposites so skillfully as to do without fulcrum or beam, who never enunciates a truth without guarding himself against being supposed to exclude the contradictory, — who holds that Scripture is the only authority, yet that the Church is to be deferred to, that faith only justifies, yet that it does not justify without works, that grace does not depend on the Sacraments, yet is not given without them, that bishops are a divine ordinance, yet those who have them not are in the same religious condition as those who have, — this is your safe man and the hope of the Church; this is what the Church is said to want, not party men, but sensible, temperate, sober, well-judging persons, to guide it through the channel of no-meaning between the Scylla and Charybdis of Aye and No."[1]

To be as good as the public opinion of your time requires is the golden mean. And what comes of that? How does it seem when old age comes on and death draws near? The poet endeavors in imagination to forecast the end of life, and with beau-

[1] *Apologia Pro Vita Sua.* By John Henry, Cardinal Newman. pp. 102, 103.

tiful poetic figures describes the habitation of the old man breaking down into decay and ruin : —

"Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth ; and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes ; but know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment. Therefore remove sorrow from thy heart, and put away evil from thy flesh ; for youth and the prime of life are vanity. Remember also thy Creator in the days of thy youth, or ever the evil days come, and the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them ; or ever the sun, and the light, and the moon, and the stars, be darkened, and the clouds return after the rain ; in the day when the keepers of the house shall tremble, and the strong men shall bow themselves, and the grinders cease because they are few, and those that look out of the windows be darkened, and the doors shall be shut in the street ; when the sound of the grinding is low, and one shall rise up at the voice of a bird, and all the daughters of music shall be brought low ; yea, they shall be afraid of that which is high, and terrors shall be in the way ; and the almond tree shall blossom, and the grasshopper shall be a burden, and the caperberry shall fail : because man goeth to his long home, and the mourners go about the streets ; or ever the silver cord be loosed, or the golden bowl be broken, or the pitcher be broken at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the cistern ; and the dust return to the earth as it was, and the spirit return unto God who gave it. . . .

. . . "This is the end of the matter ; all that hath been heard : fear God, and keep his commandments ; for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every

work into judgment, with every hidden thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil." [1]

Perhaps in this chapter I have laid too much stress on the cynical and satirical view of life which pervades this poem. It is truly a poem of two voices; in it the two spirits speak. Through it are scattered nuggets of practical wisdom which are not cynical nor satirical; such are those which commend the cultivation of the cheerful spirit, the joyous life, the real and right use of the world and what it brings to man: "Go thy way, eat thy bread with a joy and drink thy wine with a merry heart;" "Live joyfully with thy wife whom thou lovest all the days of the life of thy vanity;" "Rejoice, O young man in thy youth;" such are those which counsel to moderation and self-restraint, to self-respect and the cultivation of a sound mind: "A good name is better than precious ointment;" "The patient in spirit is better than the proud in spirit;" "Wisdom is as good as an inheritance;" such are some of the proverbs which seem not to belong to the poem, but to be attached to it, much as in a journal the writer incorporates apothegms which have impressed him as specially worthy of preservation: "He that diggeth a pit shall fall into it;" "If the serpent bite before it is charmed there is

[1] Eccles. xi. 9–xii. 7, xii. 13, 14. Some critics think that this conclusion of the whole matter was written by another pen. I cannot understand their point of view. It seems clear to me that from the beginning to the end that was the result constantly kept in mind by the writer of this gnomic monodrama.

no advantage in the charmer;" "Cast thy bread upon the waters, for thou shalt find it after many days." But these are incidental rather than essential to the poem. Its theme is indicated by its opening and its closing lines: "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity;" what then? "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die"? No! "Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man."

I do not know, and cannot easily imagine, what he makes out of the Book of Ecclesiastes who believes that every sentence in the Bible is equally authoritative with every other sentence. "Be not righteous overmuch." Is that a divinely inspired counsel? "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity." Is that a divine interpretation of life? If so, how shall we reconcile it with the declaration of Paul: "All things are yours, whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come," or that other declaration that "God giveth us all things richly to enjoy"? The truth of Ecclesiastes is the truth of human experience, larger and deeper than the truth of any text. Let the self-seeker try how he may to get satisfaction out of life, he is sure to fail — that is the lesson of Ecclesiastes — and a lesson the more eloquent because wrought out of a living experience. Try to get satisfaction out of things; warehouses ten, twelve, fourteen stories high; railroads binding together the borders of a continent; great palaces; hundred thousand dollar balls: what is

the end? "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity." We are as children who build their houses on the sand and the tide comes and sweeps them away. Try to get satisfaction out of philosophy; we do not need God, nor conscience, nor churches, nor religion; these are for women and children; we will have a public school system; great universities; knowledge; culture. What comes of that experiment? The end is the same. Cultivate the brain and leave the heart to be atrophied; cultivate the intellect and leave the conscience to die; teach men how to be shrewd, but not how to be honest, just, true, pure, and the end of that Mr. Huxley thus describes: "Undoubtedly your gutter child may be converted by mere intellectual drill into 'the subtlest of all the beasts of the field;' but we know what has become of the original of that description, and there is no need to increase the number of those who imitate him successfully without being aided by the rates."[1] This also is "vanity of vanities." Try, then, to accomplish great achievements; but still for ourselves, not for others; not great service of love, but great service of self; not great houses, not great wisdom, but great ambitions shall be our aim; shall we find our soul satisfied in this? The end of this, too, is "vanity of vanities." Self-indulgent pleasure ends in pessimism; self-indulgent ambition in fatalism: "That which hath been is that which shall be; and that which hath been done is that which shall be done; and there is no new thing

[1] *Science and Education Essays: The School Boards*, p. 396.

under the sun." That is, nothing can be done; why make the endeavor? This fatalism of Ecclesiastes is not more mournful than that of modern times, that to be found, for example, in John Cotter Morison's "Service of Man." Even self-sacrificing service of man is in his estimate of but little value: "A man with a criminal nature and education, under given circumstances of temptation can no more help committing crime than he can help having a headache under certain conditions of brain and stomach." "No merit or demerit attaches to the saint or the sinner in the metaphysical and mystic sense of the word. Their good or evil qualities are none of their making." "The sooner the idea of moral responsibility is got rid of the better it will be for society and moral education." "Bad men will be bad, do what we will;" the most we can do is to make them "less bad." This, the necessarianism of its latest apostle, is as dismal and depressing as that of Ecclesiastes. Let us then try opportunism; take life as it comes; have a good time, but not with abandon; coöperate with others, but to serve ourselves; keep the golden mean; be a trimmer in politics and vote with the winning party; be a "safe man" in the church, and teach not what we believe, but what others think we ought to believe. And though the party may give political rewards and the church ecclesiastical rewards, when old age comes and death impends, and the disgrace of a prosperous and useless life is about to be bequeathed to our sons and our sons'

sons, posterity will write our biography in this single phrase of this ancient poet, "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity."

What then? If there be no satisfaction in pleasure, in wisdom, in ambition, in the golden mean, where can it be found? In duty. In doing right because it is right. Not for reward here, nor for reward hereafter, not for happiness on earth, not for crowns in heaven, not for immortality of fame, not for immortality of personal existence; but because duty is duty, and right is right, and God is God. This seems to me the meaning of the confessedly enigmatical Book of Ecclesiastes.

CHAPTER XIII

A COLLECTION OF LYRICS

THE Book of Psalms is a collection of Hebrew lyrics. It is a mistake, though a common one, to suppose that David wrote even a considerable number of them. Ewald allows twelve of the one hundred and fifty Psalms to have been written by David; Cheyne and Driver appear to think that a slight overestimate.[1] If we suppose the earliest Psalms were written in the time of David and the last in the time of the Maccabees, — and that is now the prevailing opinion, — then the Hebrew Psalter represents about eight hundred and fifty years of song in the Hebrew nation.

The authors of these Psalms and the date of their composition are not known. The titles to certain of the Psalms giving the names of the authors and the occasions when they were composed were added by an unknown editor, who made either the collection as we now have it, or the prior collections, which are incorporated in and constitute the present collection. There is very little reason to suppose that this unknown editor had any better

[1] The twelve are Psalms iii., iv., vii., viii., xi., xv., xviii., xix. 1-6, xxiv., xxix., xxxii., ci.

advantages for knowing who were the authors of these Psalms than we have; there is reason to think that he had not as great advantages. The critical faculty was not as largely developed in that age, and the grounds on which his opinion seems to have been sometimes based would not be regarded as adequate by any modern critic. Therefore, when we read the statement at the head of a Psalm: "A Psalm of David," or "A Psalm of Moses," or "A Psalm of Solomon," or "A Psalm of David after his sin with Bathsheba," or "A Psalm of David after his experience with Doeg," we take this as what some unknown editor, perhaps two centuries before Christ, thought about the matter. These titles are no part of the original record; they are not authoritative; certainly they are not conclusive to one who studies the Bible in the scientific or literary spirit.

The collection of Psalms, as we now possess it, is composed of five collections which had been previously made. This is so evident that in the Revised Version we find the five collections put into five distinct books; each of which closes with a doxology. At the end of the second book is the statement: "The prayers of David the son of Jesse are ended." This was appended to that book to indicate that none of the subsequent Psalms belonged to David, and perhaps to indicate that all the Psalms in the previous two books were written by him. But if that was the intention, it certainly was a mistake. There are Psalms in the subse-

quent books which are, by their titles, attributed to David, and there are Psalms in the first and second books which history shows very clearly were not written by him. In my youth we sang out of a hymn book entitled "Watts and Select," Watts comprising the larger part of the collection. The Hebrew hymnal is "David and Select," though David is the composer of only a minority of the Psalms; the "select" includes an overwhelming majority of them.

The Hebrew Book of Psalms contains all the extant lyric poetry of the ancient Hebrews. The word "lyric" is derived from the word "lyre;" in its original significance a lyric poem is one intended to be sung with accompaniment on the lyre. Substantially all the Hebrew poetry intended to serve thus as a vehicle for song is included in the Book of Psalms. Their most notable characteristic is that they are all — with possibly two or three exceptions — religious. This will at first perhaps seem to the casual reader a truism, since this collection of Psalms is in the Bible; but it is in fact very significant that all the lyrics of the Hebrew people which have been preserved are of one spirit. Imagine that all the extant lyrics of an ancient people were amatory, or all were martial, should we not draw some conclusions respecting the people from this fact? In saying that all the lyrics of the ancient Hebrews are religious, I mean that they all are expressions of some phase of the divine life. Is there sorrow? it is because of separation from God; joy? it is

because of the presence of God; confession? it is of sin against God; praise? it is praise of God. No songs of lovers to their mistresses, or of maidens to victors in war or athletic contests; no dirges over the bodies of the dead; no marriage songs; no glorification of nature: all is sacred, all divine. And if we may believe that these collections are simply relics selected from a much greater mass of Hebrew lyrical poetry which has now perished,[1] then we must either suppose that substantially all the lyrics of the Hebrew people were religious in their character, or else that only those which were religious found such a place in popular esteem that they were preserved from oblivion. The former is probably the case. The Hebrew people were permeated by the spirit of religion. Their laws, their customs, their festivals, their dramas, their fiction, their folk-lore, their proverbs, their popular songs, all were pervaded by their faith in Jehovah as the God, the King, the Father of their nation. This is the first and most notable fact which confronts us at every turn in our study of Hebrew literature; the spiritual significance of this fact I leave to be considered in the closing chapter of this volume.

Poetry is difficult, perhaps impossible to define. It may be said, however, to have two characteristics, — one an artificial beauty in form, the other a vital beauty in spirit. The most exquisite figures of imagination, the greatest intensity of emotion,

[1] As is doubtless the case with the Greek lyrics. Symonds, *Greek Poets*, i. p. 293.

unaccompanied by the peculiar beauty of form which belongs to poetry may constitute poetical prose, but not poetry: it is prose, though it may be poetical prose; the most perfect beauty of form, if it clothes unpoetical ideas, is not poetry. In English literature the form consists of one of two elements, — rhyme or rhythm. Hebrew poetry contained neither. The formal characteristic of Hebrew poetry consisted in certain artificial arrangements of the lines, in parallelism, as: —

> "Bless the Lord, O my soul,
> And all that is within me bless his holy name:"

or in antithesis, as: —

> "Thou openest thine hand, they are satisfied with good;
> Thou hidest thy face, they are troubled;"

or in the repetition of a certain refrain at the end of each verse or paragraph, such as in Psalm cxxxvi., "His mercy endureth forever," or as in Psalms xlii. and xlviii., really one Psalm, accidentally or erroneously divided, the refrain: —

> "Why art thou cast down, O my soul,
> And why art thou disquieted within me?
> Hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him
> For the health of his countenance."

or a dramatic interplay of characters as between the soul, the prophet, and Jehovah in Psalm xci.: —

The Soul. "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most high
Shall abide under the shadow of the almighty.
I will say to Jehovah, my refuge and my fortress,
My God in whom I trust.

The Prophet. "For he shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler
And from the noisome pestilence.
He shall cover thee with his pinions,
And under his wings shalt thou take refuge.
. . . *Jehovah.* "Because he hath set his love upon me therefore will I deliver him:
I will set him on high because he hath known my name.
He shall call upon me and I will answer him;
I will be with him in trouble;
I will deliver him and honor him.
With long life will I satisfy him,
And show him my salvation."

All these forms are illustrated by Psalm xxiv., as sung by a procession of priests and people on some great festal day. The reader must imagine Jerusalem full of pilgrims gathered from all parts of Palestine; a great procession formed in the city; priests leading the way; a band of music composed of lyres, viols, reeds, cymbals, tambourines, castanets, drums, trumpets, accompanying it. The procession reaches the Temple gates, which are closed; and the following musical colloquy takes place: —

Chorus in procession. "The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof;
The world, and they that dwell therein.
For he hath founded it upon the seas,
And established it upon the floods.
Priest; a solo. "Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord?
And who shall stand in his holy place?
Another Priest, responding. "He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart;
Who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity,
And hath not sworn deceitfully.
He shall receive a blessing from the Lord,
And righteousness from the God of his salvation.

Chorus, in procession. "This is the generation of them that seek after him,
That seek thy face, O God of Jacob.
Chorus, at Temple gate. "Lift up your heads, O ye gates;
And be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors:
And the King of glory shall come in.
Response from within. "Who is the King of glory?
Chorus, without. "The Lord strong and mighty,
The Lord mighty in battle.
Lift up your heads, O ye gates;
Yea, lift them up, ye everlasting doors:
And the King of glory shall come in."

Then the gates are thrown open, and the procession enters while the priestly doorkeeper repeats the question: —

"Who is this King of glory?"

and the procession chants the reply: —

"The Lord of hosts,
He is the King of glory."

The spirit of poetry it is much more difficult to define. Without attempting anything so ambitious, I will venture to assume that the spirit of true poetry includes at least two elements: truth and beauty. There are two worlds, an outer and an inner; a world of sense and a world supersensuous; a world which we enter through the eye and the ear, and a world which we enter through the emotion and the imagination. To see clearly this inner, this invisible, this real and eternal world, and so to translate it into outward form that men with less power of vision can see it also, this is the function of the artist, the musician, and the poet.

Their end is the same, their instruments are different. No man is a true poet unless he first of all sees what other men of less poetic genius have failed to see, and then through literary forms interprets this vision to others. "The function of the imagination," says Hamilton W. Mabie, "is twofold: to see things in their essential nature and their universal relations, and to give them concrete form." [1] This is the function of the poet; and what we have to ask ourselves about the Hebrew lyric poets is, What did they see or think they saw respecting the essential nature of God and his relation to nature and to men? We are not to ask, What is their theology? Strictly speaking, the poet has no theology. He is an observer, not a philosopher; but an observer of the invisible world; he tells us what he has seen, and leaves us to correlate the visions with each other, and with the visions of other poets, and with the facts of the outer world, and out of all this material construct a philosophy. The poet precedes the philosopher as the observer precedes the scientist. Our question is not, What was the theology of the Hebrew poets? though out of their poems we can construct a quasi theology; but, How did they see God? how did he seem to them in his essential character and in his relations to Nature and to men?

For this much is evident concerning these Hebrew lyrics, that they are expressions of experience. They are not works of art, that is, they were not

[1] *Essays on Nature and Culture*, p. 85.

written for artistic effect; they are not dramatic, that is, they are not the imagined experiences of others. They have sprung out of the heart of the poets, that is, out of the heart of the nation, and are artless expressions of the experiences of their authors. In them, therefore, are varied experiences: love and hate, joy and sorrow, faith and doubt, hope and despair; experiences in victory and in defeat, in temptation, in repentance, and in restoration; at home and in exile; surrounded by friends and environed by enemies. They include, therefore, songs of praise and songs of penitence; songs national and songs individual; songs ecclesiastical and songs for the household; songs of ebullient joy and songs that are one long plaint of sorrow; songs of triumphant victory and songs of spiritual struggle. It is hardly too much to say that every phase of religious opinion which has ever found voice in sacred poetry is to be found expressed in some form in this collection of Hebrew lyrics. They are not all expressions of saintly faith and hope and love; sometimes the weakness of the soul is fully recognized and frankly confessed: —

"Will the Lord cast off forever?
And will he be favorable no more?
Is his mercy clean gone forever?
Doth his promise fail for evermore?
Hath God forgotten to be gracious?
Hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies?
And I said, This is my infirmity;
But I will remember the years of the right hand of the Most High.

I will make mention of the deeds of the Lord;
For I will remember thy wonders of old."[1]

Sometimes impassioned emotions, natural but not saintly, find expression in them. This is the case in the so-called imprecatory Psalms,[2] which have been in all times a source of great ethical perplexity to Bible students. Imagine the people of Israel prisoners in Babylon; their holy city destroyed; the sacred Temple razed to the ground; many of their fellows put to the sword; their children killed, their women ravished before their eyes. Their captors deride their religion, taunting them with the question, Where is now thy God? and derisively calling on them to sing their temple songs to him who has abandoned them to desolation; and this is the answer of one of their poets:

"By the rivers of Babylon
There we sat down, yea, we wept,
When we remembered Zion.
Upon the willows in the midst thereof
We hanged up our harps.
For there they that led us captive required of us songs,
And they that wasted us required of us mirth, saying,
Sing us one of the songs of Zion.
How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?
. . . . . .
O daughter of Babylon, that art to be destroyed;
Happy shall he be that rewardeth thee
As thou hast served us.

[1] Psalm lxxvii. 7–11.

[2] Such as Psalms lix., lxix., cix., cxxxvii. Observe that Psalm cxxxix. 21, 22, indicates that these are imprecations not on personal enemies but on enemies of God.

Happy shall he be that taketh and dasheth thy little ones
Against the rock." [1]

How, it is asked, can such a Psalm be reconciled with Christ's command, "Love your enemies, and pray for them that persecute you"? It cannot be reconciled with that command. It is not a divinely inspired example to be imitated; it is a very human experience to be shunned. It indicates the meaning of Christ's command and illustrates his example by setting in contrast with it the natural feeling of a truly devout soul under persecution. And yet in one respect the Psalm is inspiring and worthy of imitation. Devout people need to be inspired with hatred of cant — of the spirit which incites us to say to God not what we think, but what we think he thinks we ought to think. To be sincere, simple, genuine, transparent with God, to dare to show him our worst as well as our best, to dare to ask him to search us and see if there be any evil way in us, to treat him as we treat the physician, pointing out to him everything in us that he may teach us what is evil and what is good, and how to abhor the evil and to cleave to the good, to treat him as our best and most intimate friend, from whom we wish to conceal nothing — this is one of the lessons which the unreserved candor of these ancient lyrics teaches, and which the church still has need to learn.

We are not, then, to regard the Book of Psalms as a collection of lyrics written by artists "for art's

[1] Psalm cxxxvii. 1–4, 8, 9.

sake;" nor as dramatic interpretations of experiences imagined by the writer to be acceptable to God; nor as embodying a system of divine truth or even the contents of such a system; nor as inspired revelations of experiences which being divinely created are to be blindly imitated. We are to regard it as the actual expression of the experiences of a devout people to be studied that we may escape their doubts, their despair, their hate, their tumultuous trouble, and may secure their faith, their hope, their love, their peace; the better guide for us in our times of doubt and fear, because written by those who had like experiences and out of them were conducted, as Israel out of the Red Sea, by their God. The experience of these writers is not always congruous; but there are certain fundamental elements common to their experiences; and from them we may deduce, not indeed a coherent system of theology, but a united testimony respecting certain aspects of the divine life.

Conceiving, then, this book as an anthology of sacred lyrics respecting the deeper religious experiences of this Hebrew people during eight centuries of their national life, we ask ourselves what are the distinguishing characteristics of the experiences which it interprets.

The most fundamental fact is that God is throughout these lyrics felt as a universal Presence. Long before the doctrine of divine immanence was thought out in theology, long before Herbert Spencer had formulated the result of

philosophy in the phrase, "Amid all the mysteries by which we are surrounded nothing is more certain than that we are ever in the presence of an Infinite and Eternal Energy from which all things proceed," these ancient poets had realized this fact as an experience. It is sometimes said that the Hebrew conception of the deity was anthropomorphic. If by this is meant that the ancient Hebrews conceived of God as having experiences interpreted to us by human experiences, — joy and sorrow, hope and regret, love and wrath, — it is true; if by it is meant that they conceived of him as embodied as a man, it certainly is not true of these Hebrew singers. They sometimes conceived of him as in his holy temple, sometimes as on his throne in the heavens, but at the same time as on the earth beholding and trying the children of men.[1] He was to them a Universal Presence. I know not where in literature, ancient or modern, can be found a sublimer expression of faith in a divine Spirit who transcends all space relations, than in the one hundred and thirty-ninth Psalm: —

"Whither shall I go from thy spirit?
Or whither shall I flee from thy presence?
If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there:
If I make my bed in Sheol, behold, thou art there.
If I take the wings of the morning,
And dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea;
Even there shall thy hand lead me,
And thy right hand shall hold me.
If I say, Surely the darkness shall overwhelm me,

[1] Psalm xi. 4.

> And the light about me shall be night;
> Even the darkness hideth not from thee,
> But the night shineth as the day:
> The darkness and the light are both alike to thee."

Yet the reader will observe that this is not a theory of divine immanence; it is not, like Herbert Spencer's formula, a deduction from an examination of the mysteries by which we are surrounded. The Presence is felt, realized, experienced; the Psalm is a testimony; wheresoever the writer goes he finds his God. The scientist might conclude that God is everywhere and yet never be personally conscious of his presence. This writer draws no conclusion, makes no generic scientific statement; he simply says, God is everywhere present with me; I am conscious of him.

No other Psalm states this as clearly, as definitely, as the one hundred and thirty-ninth, but this experience of God as a universal presence underlies, pervades, characterizes, all these lyrics. They are illuminated by this God-consciousness. It is this realization of a divine presence which gives peculiar sublimity to the Nature Psalms. These are not praises of nature; they are not glowing nor picturesque, nor awe-inspiring portrayals of natural phenomena. They have no resemblance to Lord Byron's description of the thunderstorm in the Alps or John Keats' ode to Ben Nevis. They do not personify these phenomena and represent them as in themselves living entities. There is in them no hint of local deities, or sprites,

or fairies, or dragons, malicious, mischievous, or beneficent. Nature is alive; but the life is that of Jehovah, and what inspires the poet is not the phenomenon but the God who is behind the phenomenon. In the thunderstorm Jehovah bows the heavens and comes down; the darkness is his hiding place; the clouds are his pavilion; the lightnings are his arrows.[1] He is no less in the milder phases of nature's life. "He sends forth the springs into the valleys;" "he causeth grass to grow for cattle and herbs for the service of man;" he makes the darkness and it is night when all the beasts of the forest do creep forth; the young lions seek their meat from him; all living things wait on him; what they gather he gives; when he hides his face they are troubled.[2] Everything, therefore, in nature gives praise to Jehovah. All phenomena constitute a great orchestra ranged together and in harmony; at the command of the leader they glorify him. The heavens rejoice; the earth is glad; the sea roars; the fields are joyful; the trees of the wood rejoice.[3] The whole world is one vast cathedral, and all things in it are a great chorus, "and in his temple everything saith, Glory."[4] The poet recognizes no difference in this respect between different phenomena; the terrible things in nature as well as the beautiful declare Jehovah's praise. There is reverence for Jehovah, awe in his presence, but no dread of him.

[1] Psalm xviii. 7–17.
[2] See Psalm civ.
[3] See Psalm xcvi.
[4] Psalm xxix. 9, Rev. Vers.

That he is king and reigneth; that he is to be feared above all gods; that he is a righteous judge and is coming to judge the people with his truth, are causes not for fear but for rejoicing.[1] Plutarch in an eloquent passage has described the impression produced on the pagan mind by belief in the universal presence of the deity: "He fears not the sea who never goes to sea; nor a battle who follows not the camp; nor robbers that stirs not abroad; nor malicious informers that is a poor man; nor earthquakes that dwells in Gaul; nor thunderbolts that dwells in Ethiopia; but he that dreads the divine powers dreads everything; the land, the sea, the air, the sky, the dark, the light, a sound, a silence, a dream." [2] Of such dread of the universal presence of Jehovah there is no hint in these lyrics. That presence inspires to joy, a joy that often breaks out in exultant shouts, — hallelujahs in spirit not unlike our huzzahs. In this joy, not in what Jehovah has done or given, but in Jehovah himself, in his mere presence, everything is called on to unite. Like a healthy boy whose spirits must find vent, the poet calls for noise, "a joyful noise," unto Jehovah. All instruments are called into play to express this rejoicing: the harp, the timbrel, the psaltery, the trumpet, the cornet, the pipe, the stringed instruments, the loud-sounding cymbals.[3] Nor is this enough. Like the lover

[1] See Psalms xcv., xcvi. [2] Plutarch's *Morals*, i. 169.

[3] Psalms lxxxi. 1–3; xcv. 1, 2; xcviii. 4–6; c. 1; cxlix. 3; cl. 3–5.

he calls on nature to join in his rejoicing, the high and the low, the awful and the beautiful, the old and the young: —

"Praise the Lord from the earth,
Ye dragons and all deeps:
Fire and hail, snow and vapor:
Stormy wind, fulfilling his word:
Mountains and all hills;
Fruitful trees and all cedars:
Beasts and all cattle;
Creeping things and flying fowl;
Kings of the earth and all peoples;
Princes and all judges of the earth:
Both young men and maidens;
Old men and children:
Let them praise the name of the Lord;
For his name alone is exalted:
His glory is above the earth and heaven." [1]

This presence of Jehovah is seen not alone in nature; it is the secret of the nation's greatness. The great national lyrics are not praises to the nation's great men: there are no odes to Moses or Joshua or David or Solomon,[2] none to the great prophets or leaders of Israel; these are all forgotten in the absorbing brilliance of Jehovah's glory. It is not Moses who delivered Israel from Egypt, it is Jehovah: Jehovah who "brought them forth with silver and gold," Jehovah who rebuked the Red Sea and led his people through the depths "as through a pasture land," Jehovah who "spread a

[1] Psalm cxlviii. 7–13.

[2] Unless Psalms xlv. and lxxii. are exceptions: the former is a royal wedding hymn; the latter I regard as Messianic, indirectly if not directly.

cloud for a covering and a fire to give light in the night;" it was not Joshua who conquered Canaan, it was Jehovah who "smote many nations and slew mighty kings," and gave their land for an heritage to Israel his servant.[1] Let the reader compare with these Hebrew national hymns our own "America." In ours the voice is one of praise to the land where our fathers died, land of the noble free, land of the woods and templed hills, land vocal with freedom's song; only in the last verse is there any recognition of God as the "author of liberty;" the Hebrew national lyrics are vehicles of the one theme, Praise to Jehovah, who made the fruitful land and gave it to his people, whom he delivered, counseled, guided, ruled, forgave, redeemed, with a mercy which endureth forever. Even when the topic of the Psalm is a longing in exile for the singers' native land, the heart-longing is expressed as for Mount Zion, the Temple, and the Holy City, made holy because it is the city whither the tribes go up to give thanks unto the name of Jehovah.[2]

But in the experience of these Hebrew lyrical poets Jehovah is not only the God of nature and the God of the nation; he is not only present in nature and in national history; he is a personal friend ever present in the individual life. He is the poet's companion: a shepherd who causes him to lie down in green pastures, leads him beside still

[1] Psalms cv., cvi., cxxxv., cxxxvi. See, also, lxxvi., lxxviii., cxiv., cxviii.

[2] Psalms cxxii., cxxv., cxxvi.

waters, restores him when wandering, leads him in right paths, is his fellow traveler in the valley of the shadow of death, and spreads for him a table while his enemies look on amazed and unable to disturb his meal. Jehovah knew the poet before he was born; was at his birth and brought him forth into the light of life; taught him the right way in which to walk; in the time of danger protected him as the mother bird protects her young from the hawk; is a very present help to him in trouble; is ever at his right hand so that he has no fear; in times of great anxiety puts him to sleep as a nurse a wearied, worried child; is his rock and his fortress delivering him from his enemies; and when he transgresses, accepts his confession and forgives his sin.[1] It is impossible to conceive these poets as considering it a question whether there is a God. To their thinking it is only a fool who saith, "There is no God."[2] To them Jehovah is personally known; he is *my* king, *my* refuge, *my* God. An ownership of love and loyalty like the ownership of the citizen in his king, the child in his father, the wife in her husband, is established, recognized, maintained. God is in the poet's experience. To be separated from his God is the sorest evil in his captivity; to hear his God insulted with the cry, "Where is now thy God?" is of all taunts the hardest to bear; to realize that he

[1] Psalms xxiii.; cxxxix. 15, 16; xxii. 9; xxv. 8; xxvii. 11; lvii. 1; xlvi. 1; xvi. 8; iii. 5; xxxi. 3; li. 1, 2.

[2] Psalm xiv. 1.

has sinned against his God brings on him a remorse which for the time obliterates all sense of sin against himself and against his neighbor: "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned," he cries.

Jehovah is with him in all the commonplace experiences of life: makes his feet nimble to run through the troop of his enemies, to leap the wall and escape when they pursue him; makes his footing sure as he climbs the dangerous cliffs; makes his arm strong to bend the bow of brass.[1] Sorrow only drives him to God as his refuge; through doubts and despair he struggles on toward hope — toward hope in Jehovah his God; the gentleness of Jehovah makes him great, the loving kindness of Jehovah fills his cup to overflowing, the mercy of Jehovah forgives his sins and restores his soul.[2] For not even the poet's sins can separate him from his God; his God is a healer, a redeemer, a physician of souls. This is the final, the transcendent fact in the experience of the Hebrew singer.

"Bless Jehovah, O my soul;
And all that is within me, bless his holy name.
Bless Jehovah, O my soul,
And forget not all his benefits:
Who forgiveth all thine iniquities;
Who healeth all thy diseases;
Who redeemeth thy life from destruction;
Who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies;
Who satisfieth thy years with good;
So that thy youth is renewed like the eagle."[3]

[1] Psalm xviii. 28–35.

[2] Psalm xviii. 35; see also Psalm xxiii. 3, 5; lxxxvi. 5.

[3] Psalm ciii. 1–5.

"All thine iniquities" — the adultery and cruel treachery of David not too great to be forgiven; "all thy diseases" — the pride and sensuality of Solomon not too deep-seated to be cured; "redeemeth thy life from destruction" — he that would destroy himself is redeemed from his self-destruction by Jehovah; "crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies" — with kindness that comes from personal love, with tending mercies that nurse the sick back into life again; "satisfieth thy years with good so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle's" — making old age more full of a serener hope than youth with all its eager and sometimes exasperating expectations.

Modern theology might well go back to this lyric of an ancient and unknown past to learn some lessons about God. Here is no hint of some one to pay the debt, to satisfy the law, to appease the wrath. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; for his own name's sake he pardons the penitent's iniquities; according to his lovingkindness, according to the multitude of his tender mercies, he blots out the repentant's transgressions; and their greatness does not prevent; on the contrary, he pardons them because they are great.[1] Christ's parable of the Prodigal Son he borrowed and elaborated from the Hebrew poet's declaration, "Like as a father pitieth his children, so Jehovah pitieth them that fear him." Christ's picture of himself longing to gather Jerusalem under his protection as a hen

[1] Psalms li. 11, 17; xxv. 11; lxxix. 9.

gathers her chickens under her wings he borrowed from the same source: "Under his pinions will I trust." [1]

One truth the Hebrew poet did not know, for Christ had not yet brought life and immortality to light: he did not know of the future life. He had hope in God, and on that hope he built great expectations; but they were for his nation and on this earth. But he was sure that in his own time and in his own way Jehovah in whom he trusted would at last come for the redemption of Israel, and would bring deliverance not to Israel only, but to all the nations of the earth.

> "For he shall deliver the needy when he crieth;
> And the poor that hath no helper.
> He shall have pity on the poor and needy,
> And the souls of the needy shall he save.
> . . . . . .
> His name shall endure forever;
> His name shall be continued as long as the sun;
> And men shall be blessed in him;
> All nations shall call him happy." [2]

It would be strange if one man had wrought all this out in his own experience; strange if it had been all supernaturally revealed in one man's experience; but it is not less strange, looking back across the intervening centuries into a barbaric age and upon a barbaric nation, to find in eight centuries and a half of song all the ripened fruit of Christian experience suggested, except only the assurance of immortality. A God who is a uni-

[1] Psalm ciii. 13; xci. 4. [2] Psalm lxxii. 12–17.

versal presence; a God who is in all nature and with the nations of the earth; a God who cares for the children of men; a God who cares for the beasts of the forest; a God who is gentle, patient, pitying, rendering an unbought mercy out of his own free love, forgiving iniquities because they are great and man cannot deliver himself from them; a God who saves men even from their own self-willed destruction and who crowns them with a kindness that is full of love and a mercy that is full of nursing; a God who gives promise of One who shall come in time, to make clearer revelations of his judgment, of his deliverance, of his power, and of his grace — something such as this seems to me to be the religious teaching of eight centuries and a half of the unparalleled lyric song contained in the Hebrew psalter.

CHAPTER XIV

PREACHERS OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

In Bagster's edition, the Old Testament occupies five hundred and eighty-five pages; of these, one hundred and fifty-four are occupied by the Books of the Prophets; that is, more than one quarter of the entire literature of the ancient Hebrews, as it is preserved in our Protestant Bibles, is prophetic literature. This fact roughly indicates the importance which public opinion attached to the work of the prophets, and the extent of their influence upon their nation and their share in interpreting its life. What was the function of the prophet among the ancient Hebrews? Says George Adam Smith: "In vulgar use the name 'prophet' has degenerated to the meaning of 'one who foretells the future.' Of this meaning it is, perhaps, the first duty of every student of prophecy earnestly and stubbornly to rid himself. In its native Greek tongue 'prophet' meant, not 'one who speaks before,' but 'one who speaks for, or on behalf of, another.' It is in this sense that we must think of the 'prophet' of the Old Testament. He is a speaker for God. The sharer of God's counsels, as Amos calls him, he becomes the bearer and preacher

of God's word. Prediction of the future is only a part, and often a subordinate and accidental part, of an office whose full function is to declare the character and the will of God." [1]

I ask the reader of this volume to comply with this counsel, and earnestly and stubbornly to rid himself of the idea that a prophet means one who foretells events. That the prophets did not regard themselves as primarily foretellers is clear from the character of their writings, only a very insignificant part of which is taken up with predictions of any kind. In those predictions they did not always agree with one another, and the events do not always occur as the prophets expected. When Jonah told the people of Nineveh, "In forty days Nineveh shall be destroyed," he foretold what did not come to pass. "God," says the sacred writer, "repented of the evil that he had said he would do unto them," and, as an historic fact, Nineveh was not destroyed for many years after the date at which, according to the story, the prophecy purported to be delivered.

Nor did the prophets themselves regard accuracy of prediction as the test of their prophecy. On the contrary, they distinctly repudiated this test. One of the greatest of the prophets, the author of the book of Deuteronomy, written six or seven centuries before Christ, by an unknown author,[2] declares that though the prophet has accurately foretold

[1] *The Book of the Twelve Prophets*, vol. i. p. 12.

[2] See chapter v.

future events, and his witness is historically sustained, if his teaching does not sustain loyalty to Jehovah, not only is it to be counted of no value, but he himself is to be counted worthy of death. He says: —

"If there arise in the midst of thee a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and he give thee a sign or a wonder, and the sign or the wonder come to pass, whereof he spake unto thee, saying, Let us go after other gods, which thou hast not known, and let us serve them; thou shalt not hearken unto the words of that prophet, or unto that dreamer of dreams: for the LORD your God proveth you, to know whether ye love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul. Ye shall walk after the LORD your God, and fear him, and keep his commandments, and obey his voice, and ye shall serve him, and cleave unto him. And that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams, shall be put to death; because he hath spoken rebellion against the LORD your God, which brought you out of the land of Egypt, and redeemed thee out of the house of bondage, to draw thee aside out of the way which the LORD thy God commanded thee to walk in. So shalt thou put away the evil from the midst of thee." [1]

If the prophet's message is luminous with truth, if it is inspiring, if it presents to the people a grander conception of God than they have before entertained and calls them back to a more righteous life in his service, then, and only then, is the messenger to be accepted. Not by any miraculous

[1] Deut. xiii. 1–5.

quality, but by its religious spirit and character, is the teaching of the prophet to be measured. Such is the standard which the prophets themselves recognized as that by which all prophetic writings are to be judged.

It is not difficult to see how the other conception, that the prophet is primarily a foreteller, became prevalent. In the first place, he was in some sense a foreteller. There are two ways in which men are accustomed to decide on their course of action in a time of doubt. He who is charged with the responsibility of decision may endeavor to peer into the future, judge what will be the probable results of the alternative courses, and by the anticipated results determine the wisdom or the righteousness of the courses proposed. I say the righteousness, not merely the wisdom; for he who is accustomed to determine the righteousness of conduct by its results will naturally employ this method in determining the righteousness as well as the wisdom of any prospective course of action. Thus while this method is always the one pursued by the man of expediency it is not only pursued by him; it is also the method of the utilitarian. Such men serve a useful purpose; the immediate results of proposed action ought always to be taken into account, and such counselors compel us to take account of immediate results; they require the community to count the cost, which it always ought to do. But they are never far-sighted, for it is never possible for even the most sagacious mortal to foresee more

than the immediate outcome of any path of life, and this never with certainty. The other course of reaching a conclusion in such a time of doubt starts from a different premise and employs a different process. He who adopts it assumes as his premise that there are certain great principles, both of practical wisdom and of practical righteousness. On the irresistible force and immutable action of these principles he bases his judgment. The only problem is how to apply the principle, the truth of which he assumes, to the circumstances before him. If he is mistaken in his judgment of the principle the mistake is fatal; nothing can prevent inevitable disaster from following the course of action he advises. But if he is correct in his apprehension of the principle, his errors in application can be corrected from time to time as these errors are made manifest. When Thomas Jefferson, long before he or any man could have anticipated the Civil War, said in view of slavery, "I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just," Thomas Jefferson was a true prophet, not because a miraculous vision of future events was given to him, but because the sense of divine justice and the consciousness of human iniquity made him feel sure that unless the nation rid itself of its iniquity it would suffer the penalty threatened by divine justice. He who is endowed with a keen sensitiveness to moral principles, with intellectual capacity to apply those principles to national life, and with the insight which enables him to understand the

inward and real life of the nation, will be equipped with the foresight which will enable him to see — not in detail, but in a large way — what will be the future of the nation.

Thus the Hebrew prophets, because they perceived that God was just, because they perceived the divine principles which rule in the world though the world understands them not, because they understood the relation of the national events in the midst of which they lived to the divine law and the divine Lawgiver, were able to forecast the future. They did this, not generally, if ever, by listening to some message whispered into their ears, as, according to the Mohammedan legend, the dove whispered the message into the ears of Mohammed, but by their knowledge that national well-being follows national righteousness and national death follows national iniquity, and by their further perception that, in a few faithful men willing to suffer for truth and righteousness in an epoch seemingly given over to the corruption of covetousness, there is a salt which will save the corrupt nation, a light which will lead it through its gloom to the day of the Lord. Because the prophet's predictions seemed marvelous to those who do not understand the inexorable operation of divine principles in national history, attention has been diverted from those principles which formed the real subject matter of the prophet's message to those apparently more marvelous predictions which were incidental to it. Hence, too often the students of prophecy have

read the books of the Hebrew prophets, not to see what great fundamental principles they inculcate, what are the laws of national life which they make clear, and which may be justly applied in our time and to our nation, but to see how strangely their predictions correspond with events long posterior to them.

This habit of dwelling on the marvelous has been strengthened by the rabbinical habit of reading into the Old Testament books what was not in the mind of their original writers. This rabbinical habit affected to some extent the writers of the New Testament books themselves. Thus, for example, Hosea, pleading with Israel, and setting before it the mercy and love of God, illustrated by the historical fact that God loved Israel when it was weak, feeble, good-for-naught, says, "When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt."[1] It is as if the prophet said, speaking in the name of Jehovah, I knew you while you were still in bondage, and I chose you as the nation to bear the message of religious truth that God is and that he is a just God; for this purpose I chose, not the Phœnician race, mother of literature, not the Egyptian race, at once cradle and grave of civilization, not the Babylonian or Chaldean or Persian race with its wealth of territory and its concentration of power — I called you out of your bondage, a set of weak, willful, worthless slaves. When, centuries after Hosea has uttered

[1] Hosea xi. 1.

these words, the boy Jesus is taken down into Egypt by Joseph and Mary, and brought back again, Matthew seizes this phrase, "Out of Egypt I called my son," and applies it to the return of Jesus from Egypt to Galilee.[1] It is a rabbinical use of a prophetic writing. It is quite clear from the reading of the Book of Hosea itself that Hosea's reference was historical purely, that it referred to the past, not to the future.

A still more striking illustration is afforded by one of the prophecies of Isaiah. Ahaz was a weak king, wicked in his weakness, and the nation was sinking under the weight of corruption which he had not the resolution to resist. Isaiah protests in vain against the policy of Ahaz, which is bringing ruin upon the nation. "Ask," says Isaiah, "any sign you please, and it shall be granted to you as a witness that I am speaking for Jehovah." Ahaz, self-willed and determined to pursue his own course, replies, "I will ask no sign," and, piously veiling his self-will, adds, "Neither will I tempt Jehovah." Then to him Isaiah replies with indignation, "Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: behold a young woman will conceive and bear a son, and will call his name God-with-us; because before the boy knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land of whose two kings thou art sore afraid will be unpeopled, and the Lord shall bring upon thee, and thy father's house, days that have not come from the day that

[1] Matt. ii. 15.

Ephraim departed from Judah [that is, since the division of the kingdom]; even the king of Assyria."[1] Here, again, the primary meaning of the prophet is plain: on the one hand, the kings of Syria and Israel shall be defeated and their lands overrun and desolated; on the other, Ahaz shall see the result of his policy in the desolation which it will bring to his land. Seven centuries later Jesus is born, the promised Messiah, the true Immanuel for whom Israel had long been looking, the God-with-us who was to bring salvation to the race. So Matthew believed; and he seized these words of an ancient prophet and applied them to the event of his own time.[2] In fact, Jesus is not called Immanuel, either by the angel who foretold his birth, by his mother, by the people among whom he lived, or by subsequent history; nearly or quite seven centuries elapsed between the desolations of war which Isaiah had foretold and the birth of Jesus; nor is there any adequate reason to think that Isaiah had, when he wrote, any anticipation of the birth of Jesus of Nazareth, to occur so many hundred years after his prophecy.

Let the reader, then, of this volume understand, whether he agrees with it or not, the writer's point of view. This is that, though a prophet does sometimes predict, and though his prediction is some-

[1] Isa. vii. 10–17. Polychrome translation. See, also, *The Book of Isaiah*, vol. i. pp. 103–118, by George Adam Smith, who thinks there is in this passage an indirect reference to the Messiah.

[2] Matt. i. 22, 23.

times wonderfully fulfilled, his prediction and its fulfillment constitute neither the measure nor the value of his prophecy. The prophet speaks to fear, warning men of danger; he speaks to hope, inspiring them to life; but he does not to any great extent give detailed information respecting events to come. This is not his function; for no such purpose was he sent into the world. He is not a foreteller, but a forth-teller. He speaks not of the future, but for another; and that other, God. "Just as a dumb or retired person," says Ewald, "must have a speaker to speak for him and declare his thought, so must God, who is dumb in respect to the mass of men, have his messenger or speaker; and hence the word 'prophet,' in its sacred sense, denotes him who speaks, not of himself, but is commissioned by God."[1] In this sense prophets have lived from the time of Moses to the present time. Every true Christian teacher ought to be in some sense a prophet, not forecasting future events, not foretelling what is to occur, but communing with his God, and getting direct from the Father the message which he presents to those who listen to him, because he is the interpreter of another; and that other, God.

The prophets of the Old Testament, then, were first of all men of God. Not men who had reached the conclusion, by philosophical investigation, that there is a God, but men who had talked with him, walked with him, lived with him, and received their

[1] *Prophets of the Old Testament*, vol. i. p. 8.

message from him. This at least was their faith, and in this faith they spoke. Because of this faith they were accustomed to say, "Thus saith the Lord." "Hear the word of the Lord, ye rulers of Sodom," cries Isaiah.[1] "The Lord God hath spoken, who can but prophesy?" says Amos.[2] The extent to which this consciousness of the divine presence underlies the speech of the Hebrew prophets is indicated by the fact that the single phrase "Thus saith the Lord" occurs more than two hundred times in the Old Testament. Several of them give definite accounts of the commission which they received from God to be the bearer of his message. They generally were reluctant to accept it, felt their inability to fulfill it, begged to be excused. To Isaiah Jehovah appears in the Temple in a vision, and a seraph with a live coal from the altar touches his lips and takes away the uncleanness which unfits him to be Jehovah's messenger; to Jeremiah in his youth Jehovah appears, overrules his objection that he is but a child, and touches his mouth as a sign that his words shall not be his own, but Jehovah's; to Ezekiel Jehovah appears upon the plains of Chaldea by the river Chebar, and when the prophet falls upon his face in fear, bids him stand upon his feet and be not afraid to speak the words that are given to him, whether Israel will hear or whether they will forbear; Zechariah receives by night from the angel of Jehovah the strange symbolic visions which constitute the theme of his

[1] Isa. i. 10. [2] Amos iii. 8.

mystical prophecies. This is the first and most distinguishing characteristic of these prophets; they believe themselves peculiarly commissioned by Jehovah to speak in his name.[1]

And yet we are not to forget that this message which came forth from God came into, not merely unto, the prophet. It became a part of his nature, and came forth from him mixed with his own thoughts. These prophets were no machines, no amanuenses writing at dictation. They were men inspired with God's spirit, conscious of God's presence, possessing some thought or feeling or passion which they believed was God-given, and bringing their message to their people in their own language, and colored by their own personality. The differences in the form and even the spirit of their utterances is quite as great as is to be found in the utterances of any other class of writers. The sternness of a Carlyle is in Amos; the gentleness of a Whittier is in Hosea; the popular enthusiasm of a Wyckliffe is in Micah; the statesmanlike quality of a Cranmer is in Isaiah; the pathos of a Tennyson in his most pathetic moods is in Jeremiah; the radiant hopefulness of a Browning in his most optimistic moods is in the Great Unknown. God speaks in these prophets, but if we would understand their message we must understand the men.

And we must understand the age in which they lived, and the conditions under which they wrote,

[1] Isa. vi.; Jer. i. 4–10; Ezek. i. ii.; Zech. i. 1–4, 7 ff.

for they are preëminently men of their age. Concerning the events of their age they speak; to the men moved by those events they bring their messages; by those events they are themselves educated. It is, therefore, necessary to study them in connection with the events in the midst of which they live, and concerning which they speak. Without some knowledge of their times, their utterances are liable to be misunderstood, and not infrequently are almost unintelligible. As it would be impossible clearly to comprehend Jeremy Taylor's "Liberty of Prophesying" without any knowledge of the life of England in the seventeenth century, Dr. Eliphalet Nott's famous sermon against dueling without knowing the story of Hamilton and Burr, the anti-slavery poems of John Greenleaf Whittier and the anti-slavery addresses of Theodore Parker and Henry Ward Beecher without knowing that slavery existed in republican America, so it is impossible to understand the scathing denunciations of Amos, the tender pleadings of Hosea, the manly and virile pathos of Jeremiah, the hopeful visions of the Great Unknown, the Puritanism of Malachi, and the ecclesiasticism of Zechariah, without knowing the history of Israel from the days of Jehoshaphat to those of the Restoration after the exile.

Something more, however, than an understanding of great religious principles and the great national events to which the prophets apply them is necessary to a comprehension of the prophetic

teaching. Spiritual sympathy with them in their struggle against the vicious tendencies of their times is necessary to a comprehension of their spirit, and, except as their spirit is comprehended, their teaching cannot be comprehended. Each of them might have said to their auditors, as Paul to the throng at Lystra, "We also are men of like passions with you." They were men, and into their human life the reader must enter, sharing it with them. Patriots were they, loving their country with devotion; but they loved righteousness even more, and when they saw their country growing corrupt, they denounced the corruptionist, however high in station, with the fiery indignation of men who, because they love Jehovah, hate that which is evil. They shared the fears and hopes of the men of their time, and yet had an experience both of fear and of hope which transcended that of the commonplace auditors to whom they addressed their warnings and their encouragements. Men of great courage of conviction were they — none braver in human history than these ancient Hebrew prophets: Elijah denouncing King Ahab, and challenging him to conflict before the people; Nathan going to King David with his parable and saying to his face, "Thou art the man;" Amos breaking in upon the high festivities of the people with his message of stinging rebuke; Micah denouncing the rich for their oppressions of the poor. Great men were they — among the greatest of the world's leaders; sometimes

statesmen, yet never politicians; sometimes poets, yet never sentimentalists; great thinkers, but never mere scholastic philosophers; reformers, yet not impracticables; historians, but neither partisans nor opportunists.

We can better understand the characteristics which these prophets had in common, if we contrast them with the other three great types of religious teachers among the Hebrews, — the lawgivers, the wise men, and the poets.

There are three great lawgivers whose legislation remains in the religious literature of the Hebrews, — Moses, Nehemiah, and Ezra; perhaps to these should be added the unknown authors of the Deuteronomic and Levitical codes, although they were rather codifiers of existing laws than lawgivers; and this may also probably be said of Ezekiel, who like Moses was both prophet and lawgiver. The message of the prophets is generically and in spirit identical with that contained in the Book of the Covenant, and in the common law which grew out of the Book of the Covenant and finally was codified in the Book of Deuteronomy. So identical are they therewith that some scholars have regarded the prophets rather than Moses as the author of Mosaism, and Moses himself as a vague and possibly even unhistorical character, to whom the law was attributed in order to give it authority. It appears to me, however, that even the casual reader can discover an important difference between the laws of Moses as they are contained

in the Pentateuch, including both the Levitical and the Deuteronomic codes, and the utterances of the prophets. The former were statutory in their tone. They appear to initiate law, to create obligations. Their spirit is fairly indicated in the words with which the farewell speech of Moses in the Book of Deuteronomy draws to its close: "See, I have set before thee *this day* life and good, and death and evil; in that I command thee *this day*, to love Jehovah thy God, to walk in his ways, and to keep his commandments and his statutes and his judgments." [1] This is rarely the language of the prophets. They assume the law as something known, recognized, familiar to the people. They take it as a standard already established, as part of a covenant already entered into; and with it they measure the life of the nation; by it they condemn the nation; and, condemning, they call on the nation to repent and return to its loyalty and obedience. Their language therefore is that of Isaiah, who refers his hearers "to the law and to the testimony" as something well known; that of Jeremiah, who answers the self-excusing Jews, "ye have not obeyed the voice of Jehovah, nor walked in his laws, nor in his statutes, nor in his testimonies;" that of Hosea, who represents Jehovah as saying to the people, "seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God I will also forget thy children;" that of Amos, who foretells the impending doom of Judah because "they have re-

[1] Deut. xxx. 15, 16.

jected the law of Jehovah and have not kept his statutes." [1] Therefore is it that their message is a summons not to begin a life never before known, to enter into a covenant never before proposed to them, but to return to the life which they have abandoned, and to renew the covenant which they have broken. Moses is represented as proposing a new covenant to Israel: "If ye will obey my voice and keep my covenant then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people;" [2] even Joshua is represented as calling on them to confirm this covenant almost as though it were now made for the first time.[3] But the summons of the prophets is very different; it is a summons to Israel to remember the forgotten law, to repent of their violation of it, and to return to Jehovah who has been abandoned and to their covenant with him which has been disregarded.[4] Throughout, the prophets assume that the people have long possessed a divine law, that their life is a flagrant violation of that law, that they must repent and return to Jehovah and renew their allegiance to his law. This is not the language of the lawgiver. It would be as inappropriate in the Book of the Covenant or even in the Book of Deuteronomy as would be the Ten Commandments in the Books of Isaiah, Amos, or Hosea.

[1] Isa. viii. 20; Jer. xliv. 23; Hosea iv. 6; Amos ii. 4.

[2] Exod. xix. 5.

[3] Josh. xxiv. 15–21.

[4] Isa. xliv. 22; Jer. iii. 22; iv. 1; xviii. 11; Ezek. xviii. 23; Mal. iii. 7.

The difference between the prophets and the wise men is equally marked. We have seen that the characteristic of the wise men, as illustrated by the books of Proverbs and of Ecclesiastes, is that they inculcate ethical maxims based sometimes upon conscience, but more generally upon prudential considerations. There are few or no maxims in the prophets. They rarely even quote a proverb, still more rarely employ the proverbial method. Their appeal is not to experience; their theme is not the duty of man to man. It is true that they have much to say of the sin of inhumanity, much of the duty of considering the poor and the oppressed; but the sin is almost invariably treated as a sin against Jehovah, the punishment as inflicted by Jehovah. To oppress the poor, keep the debtor's pledge of clothing overnight in violation of the law, live in sensuality and intemperance, is to transgress the law of Jehovah; to seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow, is to return to Jehovah and be cleansed by him.[1] The teachings of the prophets are ethical, but the sanctions of those teachings are divine; sin is more than folly, more than violation of law; more than wrong inflicted upon a neighbor; it is disloyalty to God — who is the king, the father, the husband, of his people, disobedience to whom is treachery in the citizen, unfilial conduct in the son, unfaithfulness in the wife.

[1] Amos ii. 6–8; Micah ii. 1, 2; iii. 9–12; Isa. iii. 15; v. 8–20; i. 16–18.

The difference between the prophets and the poets is perhaps not so striking; for the poet is also a prophet and the prophet is also a poet. There is reason to believe that the prophets sometimes sang their utterances in a monotonous chant; some of them are poetic in form, more of them in spirit.[1] Yet there is a real difference between the poets — whether lyric, epic, or dramatic — and the prophets, in that the former describe experiences either their own or dramatically that of others, and leave the experience to convey its own lesson, while the prophets are distinctly and directly didactic. The poets are interpreters of life, generally of religious life; the prophets are teachers of truth, always of religious truth. The conscious object of the former is to express themselves, the conscious object of the latter to impress their auditors; the former sing, the latter speak; the former are poets primarily, preachers secondarily; the latter are preachers primarily, poets secondarily. Speaking broadly, we shall not be far wrong if we say that the poets are didactic poets and the prophets are poetical teachers; the poetry of the first is imbued with a religious purpose, the preaching of the second is imbued with a poetic spirit.

That Jehovah is a righteous Person, that his laws are righteous laws, that obedience to them requires sobriety, humanity, and reverence, that no

[1] 1 Sam. x. 5. For poetical forms see the translations in the *Polychrome Bible*, or in *The Book of Isaiah* or *The Book of the Twelve Prophets*, by George Adam Smith.

sacred ceremonial can serve as a substitute for such obedience, that man's inhumanity to man is a sin against God and that the only genuine repentance is a return to Jehovah and to a life of righteousness, is the common teaching of all these prophets: and yet their messages are as various as their characters. Amos is a moral reformer, appears suddenly in the midst of Israel's greatest apparent prosperity but real corruption and hastening decay, to denounce the nation's profligacy and inhumanity, expose the falsity of hopes built on a traditional theology and a ceremonial religion, and foretell coming disaster and doom; Hosea is a poet, who has learned the deepest truths of human sinfulness and divine love in the school of his own bitter experience, — the infidelity of his wife has brought home to him the guilt of Israel's disloyalty to Jehovah, his own long-suffering love for his wife has taught him the strong love of Jehovah, too deep to be destroyed by human sin, however damnable; Isaiah is a statesman, strong leader of the people, wise counselor of kings, whose courage sustains the heart of the people in dire disaster, whose wisdom might have saved the kingdom from destruction had the kings followed his counsels; Micah is the prophet of the poor, the religious socialist of his age, who denounces the greed of the rich and the vices of the capital, and for the nation's redemption looks not to the court or the city but to the country village and the ranks of the plain people; Zephaniah, living in the superficial

and transient reforms of King Josiah, perceives how superficial and transient they are, and utters the one word of warning against the hopes which are built upon them; Nahum, with a fine scorn of imperial greatness inspired by the spirit of cruelty, foretells the siege and fall of Nineveh, city of blood and of ceaseless rapine; Habakkuk is a skeptic with clinging faith, whose verse begins with the skeptic's cry, "O Lord, how long shall I cry and thou wilt not hear," and ends with the answer of faith, "Though the fig tree shall not blossom neither shall fruit be in the vines, . . . yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation;"[1] Obadiah is an outraged idealist, whose indignation in the hour of his nation's apparent ruin cries out against the apathy of a kindred people gloating over his brother's misfortune; Jeremiah is the first distinctive individualist among the Hebrew prophets, — a Huguenot in an age ruled by the Medici, a Savonarola in an age of Alexander VI., execrating himself, at times execrating his age and his people, at other times pleading with them for Jehovah and with Jehovah for them, with infinite pathos, and amidst the ruins of the old covenant destroyed by Israel's sin and Jehovah's consequent repudiation of it, prophesying a new covenant with the elect individuals saved from the nation's wreck, — strange, sad, self-contradictory, eloquent, pathetic, despairing, brave, a Protestant before Protestantism, a Puritan before

[1] Nah. iii. 1; Hab. i. 2; iii. 17, 18.

Puritanism; Ezekiel is the prophet of the Exile, endeavoring to preserve the faith of his people by solidifying their religious institutions and codifying their ecclesiastical laws, the first of the prophets to prophesy in writing, the literary prophet, therefore, churchman among prophets, prophet among churchmen, unlike most churchmen of later history, emphasizing the universal Presence where there is neither Temple nor ritual, and the divine Immanence as the secret of all life and the hope of all the future; the Great Unknown is the most catholic of all the prophets, — recognizes even in the pagan Emperor Cyrus the Great a messenger and servant of Jehovah, foresees the coming of pagan peoples to share Israel's future glory, is the first of Hebrew teachers to see that suffering is not a sign of divine displeasure but a commission to divine service, first to see that the suffering for sin is to be cured by sinless suffering, first to foresee a Suffering Servant of Jehovah yet to come, out of the travail of whose soul a new Israel will be born, — of all the Hebrew prophets the one with the widest horizon and the deepest insight; Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi are prophets of the restoration: Haggai, a churchman who urges on the rebuilding of the Temple; Zechariah, a contemporary of the same school, whose mystic visions are as untranslatable into prose as those of Percivale in Tennyson's "Holy Grail;" Malachi, a Puritan prophet who protests against those corruptions of life and doctrine which always accompany an ecclesiastical

revival: men of contrary temperament these, but belonging to the same epoch and produced by the same influences as Loyola and Luther by the Renaissance, or Laud and Cartwright by the Puritan revival; Joel is a moral poet of uncertain date who draws from so simple an incident as a devastating flight of locusts a symbol of the judgment day of Jehovah; Jonah is a satire written by an unknown author on the narrowness of Israel and a testimony to the universality of Jehovah's lovingkindnesses and tender mercies; and Daniel is latest of all the prophets, and his apocalyptic visions, like those of his antitype in the New Testament, are still a perplexity to the spiritual and a peril to the literalist.

If we attempt to combine in a single sentence the message of these prophets it will be something like this: we learn from Amos that God is a just God who will not spare the guilty; from Hosea that he is a merciful God, tender, patient, and long-suffering; from Micah that he is the God of the poor, and will punish those who wrong his poor; from Isaiah and Nahum that he is the God of nations, the real power in all history and behind all powers; from Zephaniah that he cannot be deceived by pretentious and superficial reforms; from Habakkuk that the soul can trust in him when it cannot understand his ways; from Jeremiah that he is the God of individuals and that no nation can be righteous in his sight whose individual members are unrighteous; from Ezekiel that he is the Universal Presence, in the desert as in

the Temple; from the Great Unknown that he is the God of all hope and will redeem the world from sin and suffering by sinless suffering; from Jonah that he is a God of all peoples, Jew and Gentile; from the prophets of the restoration, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi, that the religion of form and the religion without form are both acceptable to God, if there be the real spirit of faith and hope and love in either the one or the other; and last of all, from Joel that God will come to judge the world with righteousness and the people with his truth.

But the prophets have another function to perform than to testify to the meaning of righteousness in God and in man; the consideration of that function must be reserved for another chapter.

CHAPTER XV

PREACHERS OF REDEMPTION

"By religion," says John Henry Newman, "I mean the knowledge of God, of his will, and of our duties toward him."[1] By religion the ancient Hebrew included also the acceptance of reliance upon God's promises. The relation of man to God is one of dependency; but a relation of dependency involves mutual obligations, those of the dependent to his superior, those of the superior to the one who is dependent upon him. It is the distinctive characteristic of the religious teachers of the ancient Hebrews that they frankly recognize this mutuality of obligation between God and man, between the Creator and the creature; between the divine Sovereign, Father, Husband, and the human citizen, child, wife; to speak more accurately, they represent Jehovah himself as recognizing it. Jehovah is a King: the citizens owe loyalty to the king, but the king also owes protection to the citizens; Jehovah is a Father: the child owes obedience to the father, but the father also owes counsel and sustenance to the child; Jehovah is a Husband: the wife owes fidelity to her husband, but the husband also

[1] *Grammar of Assent*, p. 378.

owes love and guardianship to the wife. This recognition of mutual obligation is implied in the word used to designate the relation between God and men, Covenant or Testament, and so identified with the relation which the literature seeks to describe that it is made the title of the entire collection. A covenant necessarily implies mutuality, and this mutuality is directly affirmed, and, what is more important, tacitly assumed by Jehovah in all his revelations of himself and in all his dealings with his people. Religion, in the thought of these Hebrew writers, consists not merely of the obligation which man owes to God, but also and equally of the obligation which God has assumed toward man, and it is not too much to say that scarcely less stress is laid in the sacred writings on what God will do for man, than on what man ought to do in fulfillment of his duties toward God. In short, these writings are not less promises of divine counsel, comfort, protection, and support than they are summons to human loyalty and obedience. In this respect, as in some others, the religion of the ancient Hebrews is unique. The gods of the Greeks and Romans are represented as sometimes rendering special favors to special favorites, but I do not think any pagan religion represents the deity as entering into a covenant with the human race or even with a special people, and binding himself by pledges to them, so that the history of their national life consists of the history of his fulfillment of this covenant and their fulfillment of

it, or failure to fulfill. But this is in the Hebrew history and the Hebrew literature the distinctive characteristic of Jehovah: he is a covenant-making and a covenant-keeping God.

This mutuality of obligation between Jehovah and Israel is accompanied by explicit promises and pledges on his part to Israel. And these promises give to Israel's religion another distinctive peculiarity. Their religion is forelooking, it is anticipatory, it appeals to hope, it is an incentive to progress. The golden age of the ancient Hebrews was in the future; that of other ancient nations was in the past. In general, pagan religion is essentially conservative if not reactionary. It recalls or imagines a position of glory from which the nation has fallen; it turns the thoughts of the people toward the past; it rehearses their sins and demands of them some expiation; it is so busy in providing this expiation that it has no time or thought to interpret present duties or inspire future hopes. It is true that the Hebrew religion had in its legends the story of a garden of innocence and a fall. But that story once told was never repeated. It is not referred to again in all the Hebrew literature. Never does poet or prophet recall to the people their Eden or call on them to go back to it. It is true that the sins of Israel are clearly depicted and judicially condemned, and the people are summoned to repentance. But they are told to show their repentance by a new life; Daniel's message to Nebuchadnezzar summarizes the message of all

the prophets to Israel: "Break off thy sins by righteousness." The burden of the pagan priest is atonement for past sin; the burden of the Hebrew prophet is performance of present duty and pressing forward toward future ideals. And these ideals are put before the people as possible because they are the people of Jehovah, and Jehovah is a covenant-keeping God, who recognizes mutuality of obligation between himself and his people, and will forgive and forget the past, and give them wisdom and strength for the future.

This anticipatory quality, this forelooking based on the promises of a God who is a covenant-maker and a covenant-keeper, appears in the very earliest legends of this peculiar people; and it distinguishes their earliest legends from the somewhat analogous ones of other peoples. It is true that these legends were probably reduced to writing at a later date in Hebrew history; but it is also true that the writing probably represents the earliest legends, and so the earliest faith. The creation hymn with which the Book of Genesis opens declares that God has created the world for man, and has given it to him to possess it, and bids him have dominion over it and over all which it contains. Such a command accompanying such a gift is itself a promise of wisdom and power adequate to accomplish the so great achievement. The legend of the Fall is accompanied by a promise at once greater and more explicit: the serpent which has brought disobedience into the garden shall bite man's heel, that is, shall

poison the whole human race, but the seed of the woman shall crush the serpent's head, that is, shall at last destroy the sin which has poisoned and embittered human life. As the theme of a symphony is indicated in the opening movement, so in those prehistoric legends appear the double task given to man and the promise of its fulfillment: he shall struggle with nature, but he shall conquer her and make her his servant; he shall struggle with moral evil, and it shall embitter his life, but he shall utterly destroy it. With the commission and the warning is the promise of final success.

This note of promise is sounded throughout the Hebrew literature; this attitude of expectancy characterizes the devout and faithful in Israel in all stages of the national history. In the prehistoric legends the Flood is followed with the bow set in the clouds as a sign of God's covenant with Noah and with all flesh; Abraham the father of Israel is called out of the land of idolatry by the promise that he shall be made the father of a great nation in a land which shall be shown to him; Moses is commissioned in the desert to call Israel out of bondage to a promised land to be given to them; at Mount Sinai not the law only is given, but the promise is also given that if they keep their covenant, God will make of them a kingdom of priests, a holy nation; to Joshua Jehovah repeats the promise that he will give the land to Israel, if their leader is strong and courageous and

obedient.[1] The land once possessed, the promises take on a new form. They are now of a king and a kingdom; a king to sit on the throne of David, to rule in righteousness, over a peaceful kingdom with extensive domain, chastened if he falls into iniquity, but not deserted by his God.[2] When troubles gather about the kingdom, the promise changes again; it is no longer of a land, — the land has been given; nor of a kingdom, — the kingdom has been organized; it is of deliverance. The nation is in darkness, but it shall see a great light; the rod of the oppressor shall be broken; the armor of the armed man and the garments rolled in blood shall be fuel for the fire; a Prince shall be born who shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace; of the increase of his government and of peace there shall be no end.[3] The promises of Jehovah are all conditional; they are parts of a mutual covenant. The conditions are not fulfilled by Israel, and therefore the rod of the oppressor is not broken; Jerusalem is destroyed and Judah is carried into captivity; but the promise still abides, though its form changes. It is now a promise of restoration; a remnant shall be saved, and of this remnant a new Israel shall be created and a new covenant made with them, and they shall no longer

[1] Gen. i. 28, 29; iii. 15; ix. 8–17; xii. 1–3; xiii. 14–17; xii. 1–7; Ex. iii. 7, 8; xix. 5, 6; Jos. i. 1–9.

[2] 2 Sam. vii. 11–16; Ps. lxxii.

[3] Isa. vii. 10–17; ix. 2–7.

need priest to minister to them nor prophet to teach them, for "they shall all know me from the least unto the greatest."[1] Thus throughout this history of the promises of Jehovah and the expectancy of Israel there is a common theme: it is the establishment, or the deliverance, or the recovery and restoration, of the kingdom of Jehovah; and is generally accompanied by, centred around, and founded upon a representative of Jehovah yet to appear. But there are also great differences in the promises and the anticipations. The promise is sometimes of the establishment of a kingdom not yet existing, sometimes the deliverance of a kingdom environed by foes, sometimes the restoration of a kingdom apparently utterly destroyed. Sometimes the central figure is a priest, sometimes a prophet, sometimes a king, sometimes a Suffering Servant of Jehovah;[2] sometimes the kingdom is one of terrestrial glory, in which the implements of war will become implements of peaceful agriculture and even the wild beasts will be domesticated and the poisonous creatures will lose their venom; sometimes it is purely spiritual, a kingdom without ark, or temple, or ritual; sometimes it involves the building of a new temple, the reorganization of the priesthood and the rehabilitation of the sacrifices;[3] sometimes Israel is represented as conquering the pagan nations which are destroyed, sometimes the

[1] Jer. xxxi. 1–9, 31–34.

[2] Deut. xviii. 15–19; Num. xxv. 12, 13; Isa. liii.

[3] Isa. ii. 2–4; xi. 6–9; Jer. iii. 16; Ezek. xi. 17–20, xl.–xlviii.

pagan nations enter into Jerusalem and share Israel's glory with her; sometimes the promise is in form one to be fulfilled in that generation, sometimes it has in it a suggestion of a far-away look down the ages, the hope in the midst of impenetrable darkness of a distant dawn.[1]

It does not come within the province of this volume to trace out these promises of the prophets and hopes of Israel in detail. All I attempted to do in treating of the law of Israel, whether civil or ecclesiastical, was to indicate its general character; this is all I can do in treating of Israel's hopes.[2] But I may indicate the nature of this aspect of Hebrew religious teaching by the two examples furnished by the ministry of the two greatest of the prophets of redemption, — Hosea and the Great Unknown.

Hosea lived in the closing years of Israel's national existence, when the universal corruption was beginning to bring forth its inevitable results

[1] Compare Obadiah with Isaiah chap. liv. and lx.

[2] For a more careful study of this aspect of prophecy as viewed by the modern school the reader is referred to *Messianic Prophecy*, by Charles A. Briggs, D. D.; *Messianic Prophecy*, by Dr. Edward Riehm; *The Old Testament Prophecy of the Completion of the Kingdom of God*, by Dr. C. von Orelli; *Israel's Messianic Hope*, by G. S. Goodspeed; *The Hope of Israel*, by F. H. Woods, D. D. The Table of Prophecies or Allusions to Christ in the Appendix to Bagster's Bible, or similar tables in any of the Teacher's Bibles, may be examined to advantage; but the student will need to examine the Old Testament passages there referred to in connection with the historical events with which they are directly connected, — otherwise he will be liable to be misled.

in universal disorder and approaching dissolution. In twelve years seven "puppet kings," as Hosea contemptuously called them, reigned over Israel. Of these seven kings four were assassinated. Revolution followed revolution, but no change brought reformation. "Shallum slew Zechariah; Menahem slew Shallum; Pekah slew the son of Menahem; Hoshea slew Pekah. The whole kingdom of Israel was a military despotism, and, as in the Roman Empire, those in command came to the throne; Baasha, Zimri, Omri, Jehu, Menahem, Pekah, held military office before they became kings." [1]

The public troubles would have been quite enough to make sore the heart of so tender a man as Hosea; but he had personal troubles which might have made, but did not make it bitter. His references to them are brief and enigmatical, but from them it is not difficult to construct the tragic story of his domestic life. He married. His wife was unfaithful to him. His first child he recognized as his own, and named him Jezreel, from the famous battlefield of Israel. Then a daughter was born, but not until he had discovered the infidelity of his wife, although he had not put her away. Two years later a son was born. He had as little faith in the legitimacy of the son as in that of the daughter. The one he called "Not knowing a father's love," or "The unloved one;" the other he called "No kin of mine." Still he did not divorce his wife, nor send her away from him. He

[1] *The Minor Prophets*, by E. B. Pusey, D. D., vol. i. pp. 9, 10.

was living in an age like that of the Stuarts in England, when unchastity among men was regarded as honorable rather than shameful, and perhaps he thought a time in which man justified unchastity in himself was not one in which man should be vindictive toward an unchaste woman. Certainly he did not turn his faithless wife away from him. But she grew weary of him, — perhaps of his very piety and love, — and abandoned him. Prophets have rarely been rich men, either in olden or in modern times. And she was ambitious; eager for wealth and what wealth could give her. She abandoned her husband for some other lover, whose name is unknown to us, who would give her earrings and jewels and fine dresses. The result was inevitable. She sank lower and lower; went from lover to lover; and finally sold herself into a life of public harlotry. But though Hosea had never forgotten, he had always forgiven her; and when he finally found her a slave — by what process he traced her and discovered her he does not tell us — he brought her back, though she had fallen so low that he paid for her less than would be paid for one of the cheaper and poorer slaves. Her beauty and her charm were gone; love for her was impossible; and when he took her he said to her, No more wife of mine are you, no more husband of yours am I, but I will be your guardian and your protector. And there the story ends.

Wise is the man who knows how to extract honey from the thistle; wise the man who knows

how out of his profound sorrow to learn lessons of God's love and God's truth. Such a wise man was Hosea. He did not devote himself to a discussion of the problem of moral evil. He did not even consider the question, Does God send trouble? But he said to himself: This experience has not been sent to me in vain; it was a part of the divine plan that I should have such a wife, and such an experience with her, and that I should learn some lesson from it: what is that lesson? And he learned it; and this was the lesson that he learned: That God is the faithful lover, and the unrighteous nation is the unfaithful wife; that sin against God is a sin, not against law chiefly, but against love; and love is infinite and eternal and cannot be destroyed. His hard experience of bitter personal grief he accepted as a parable, and out of this parable he learned for himself and taught to others the lesson of Israel's sin and Jehovah's mercy.

The story of Hosea illustrates the spirit and method of the prophets. They were teachers of their own time and to their own time; they learned the truth from their own experience and taught it to their own generation. They were sometimes mistaken in the immediate applications of that truth, as Hosea was. He fondly hoped that Israel would awake before it was too late, in response to Jehovah's love, as perhaps he had hoped to awaken conscience if not love in his unfaithful wife by his own fidelity. In both cases his imme-

diate hope was but a dream. He thus conceives God expressing his joy in the repentance and return of his people to him: —

"I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely: for mine anger is turned away from him. I will be as the dew unto Israel: he shall blossom as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon. His branches shall spread, and his beauty shall be as the olive tree, and his smell as Lebanon. They that dwell under his shadow shall return; they shall revive as the corn, and blossom as the vine: the scent thereof shall be as the wine of Lebanon. Ephraim shall say, What have I to do any more with idols? I have answered, and will regard him: I am like a green fir tree; from me is thy fruit found." [1]

But the people of the Northern Kingdom, to whom Hosea prophesied, never did return to Jehovah; they abandoned their religion when they went into captivity, and in losing their religion lost their nationality, and have forever disappeared from the world's history. Looking for the Lost Tribes of Israel is like looking for the drops of rain which have fallen on the Great Desert, or for the cloud which the sun has drunk up in a July sky.[2] But the love of God which Hosea experienced is eter-

[1] Hosea xiv. 4–8.

[2] It does not come within the scope of these articles to enter into a discussion of any of the disputed questions of Biblical history or Biblical criticism. It must suffice here to say that the notion that the Lost Tribes of Israel have reappeared in the Anglo-Saxon or any other race has no historical warrant, and rests wholly upon a view of prophecy the literalism of which history proves to be incorrect.

nal, and the power of that love and the joy of that love in the return of the repentant are eternal, and in this love, rejoicing to rescue from sin whoever will accept rescue, lies the secret of all restoration to life from apostasy, national or individual. Hosea saw God truly ; for Israel he hoped beyond measure.

The prophecies of the Great Unknown are contained in the last chapters of Isaiah, — from the fortieth to the sixty-sixth, — apparently one prophecy, in which an unknown prophet gathers up the lessons which God had taught to Judah through seventy years of captivity, and repeats them for the instruction of the world in all time to come. He is sometimes called the Second Isaiah ; he is more properly designated as the Great Unknown. His prophecies are bound up with those of an Isaiah who lived a century before ; but the circumstances and the messages of the two are widely different.[1] One prophesied before the captivity, the other as the captivity drew to its close. The preface to the prophecies of the one is a vehement denunciation

[1] All scholars of the modern or literary school agree that Isaiah chapters xl.–lxvi. were written by a different writer than Isaiah the son of Amoz, and at the close of the captivity. The incidental references to Cyrus (Isa. xliv. 28 ; xlv. 1), who was not living in the time of the first Isaiah, the differences in style, the differences in theme and spirit, and the different commissions, all point to this conclusion. The only reason for regarding these later chapters as by the author of the previous prophecies is that this is the traditional view, and that the prophecies were bound up together.

of the Jews as rulers of Sodom and the people of Gomorrah, and the prophecies themselves are full of warnings of the impending judgment of God upon the nation; the preface to the other begins with "Comfort ye, comfort ye, my people;" goes on to declare that they have suffered the penalty which had been threatened, and learned the lesson which that penalty was meant to teach; and the theme of the subsequent prophecies is the approaching redemption of the nation and its restoration to its land, its city, and its temple. Each of the two prophets, Isaiah the son of Amoz, and the Great Unknown, has given an account of his call to the ministry. That of Isaiah is given in the sixth chapter of the Book of Isaiah; that of the Great Unknown in the fortieth chapter. The latter's call is simpler and less dramatic than that of his predecessor, but his message is not less explicitly given to him: —

"Comfort ye, comfort ye, my people, saith your God.
Speak ye tenderly to Jerusalem, and proclaim to her
That her hard service is accomplished, her debt of guilt is discharged,
That she has received from Jehovah's hand double for all her sins.
Hark! there is a cry:
Voice. "Clear ye in the wilderness the way of Jehovah,
Make plain in the desert a highway for our God,
Let every mountain and hill sink down, and every valley be uplifted,
And let the steep ground become level, and the rough country plain!
And the glory of Jehovah will be revealed, and all flesh will see it together, for the mouth of Jehovah has spoken it.
The Prophet. "Hark!

The Voice. "Cry!
The Prophet. "What shall I cry?
All flesh is grass, and all the strength thereof like the flowers of field;
The grass withers, the flowers fade, because the breath of Jehovah has blown thereon.
The Voice. "The grass withers, the flowers fade;
But the Word of our God stands for ever." [1]

This is the fundamental message of the Great Unknown: Men are like flowers of the field, living to-day, perishing to-morrow; nations, institutions, political and religious, pass like shadows across the mountains; shadows we are and shadows we pursue; and yet, behind them all, manifesting himself through them all, vocal in all history, revealing himself in all phenomena, is God. The grass withers, the flowers fade, but the manifestation and utterance of the Eternal abides forever and speaks through all transitory phenomena. This is the fundamental message of the Great Unknown. In some sense like that of Moses, like that of Hosea, like that of the First Isaiah, like that of the unknown writer of Deuteronomy, like that of later prophets, even down to our own time, is this word of prophecy: The Eternal abides forever, and all phenomena are but the ever-changing manifestations of his ever unchangeable Presence.

But if Isaiah shared this message with other and previous prophets, he learned one lesson and taught one truth which no prophet before his time had seen and few even of Christianly instructed teachers have seen more clearly.

[1] Isa. xl. 1–8. Polychrome translation, modified.

Great men give their message to the age in which they live; great men also grow out of the age in which they live. If there could have been no Exodus without a Moses, there could have been no Moses without an Exodus. If there could have been no Reformation without a Luther, there could have been no Luther without a Reformation. If there could have been no Puritan revolt without a Cromwell, there could have been no Cromwell without a Puritan revolt. If Lincoln led us safely through the Civil War, the Civil War led Lincoln safely from the Illinois politician to the world statesman. It is the distinctive characteristic of great men that their hearts are open to the influences by which they are surrounded, and hence open to hear the voice of God in current events, and to learn the lesson which passing history has for them. The annalist simply narrates events; the prophet sees behind them the Word of God, and gives interpretation to the events. The Great Unknown was in this sense the product of the age to which he spoke. His lesson was learned in the school of experience; his message was taught to him by contemporaneous history; he was the child of the Exile; — and in this Exile he learned a lesson which could be learned only in the school of suffering. Israel's great teachers had been preëminently the sufferers of the nation — just men suffering for the unjust: Amos, the righteous, bearing the burden of a most unrighteous people; Hosea, the loyal, bearing the burden of a most unloyal people; Micah, the peas-

ant prophet, bearing the burdens of the peasant poor; Isaiah, the strong-hearted hater of corruption, living a lifelong martyrdom and dying a martyr's death; Jeremiah, weeping bitter tears for sins that were not his own. And the Great Unknown dimly sees what even now the Church of Christ sees not too clearly — that salvation comes through sorrow, that the suffering ones are the victorious ones, that the redemption of the nation must come, not by a crowned king, but by a Suffering Servant. Sometimes this suffering servant appears to the prophet to be the entire nation suffering for its own sins and for the sins of the world, and working out its own redemption by its own suffering; sometimes to be some one especially chosen out of that nation, suffering with and for them; sometimes the prophet himself; in one notable ode the prophet seems to see dimly in the vista of the future a single figure bearing in his own person the burdens of humanity, a Sinless Sufferer by his suffering bringing healing to others:[1]

"Who indeed can yet believe our revelation?
And the arm of Jehovah — to whom has it disclosed itself?

"He grew up as a sapling before us,
And as a sprout from a root in dry ground,
He had no form nor majesty,
And no beauty that we should delight in him.

"Despised was he, and forsaken of men,
A man of many pains, and familiar with sickness,

[1] Isa. xliv. 1, 2, 21; xlii. 1–4; xlix. 5–10; lii. 13–15.

Yea, like one from whom men hide the face,
Despised, and we esteemed him not.

" But our sicknesses, alone, he bore,
And our pains — he carried them,
Whilst we esteemed him stricken,
Smitten of God, and afflicted.

" But alone he was humiliated because of our rebellions,
Alone he was crushed because of our iniquities;
A chastisement, all for our peace, was upon him,
And to us came healing through his stripes.

" All we, like sheep, had gone astray,
We had turned, every one to his own way,
While Jehovah made to light upon him
The guilt of us all.

" He was treated with rigor, but he resigned himself,
And opened not his mouth,
Like a lamb that is led to the slaughter,
And like a sheep that before her shearers is dumb.

" Through an oppressive doom was he taken away,
And as for his fate, who thought thereon,
That he had been cut off out of the land of the living,
That for my people's rebellion he had been stricken to death?

" And his grave was appointed with the rebellious,
And with the wicked his tomb,
Although he had done no injustice,
Nor was there deceit in his mouth.

" But it had pleased Jehovah to crush and to humiliate him.
If he were to make himself an offering for guilt,
He would see a posterity, he would prolong his days,
And the pleasure of Jehovah would prosper in his hands.

. . . . . .

" He would deliver from anguish his soul,
Would cause him to see light to the full.

" With knowledge thereof my Servant will interpose for many,
And take up the load of their iniquities.
Therefore shall he receive a possession among the great,
And with the strong shall he divide spoil.

" Forasmuch as he poured out his life-blood,
And let himself be reckoned with the rebellious,
While it was he who had borne the sin of many,
And for the rebellious had interposed." [1]

Did the Great Unknown, looking through the centuries, get a glimpse of Calvary, of the blood-stained face and the thorn-crowned brow, or did he only learn from the anguish of the past that all victory comes through battle and all salvation through suffering? Did he only see the great generic truth, which too many men have failed to see, even though it is focused and centralized in the Passion of Jesus the Christ? I do not know; only this I know: that nowhere, not even by Paul, is that truth more splendidly illustrated in literature than in this fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, and nowhere has it such divine illustration in history as in the suffering and death of Jesus of Nazareth.

Of the great men of Hebrew history — save only Jesus of Nazareth, who can be classified with no race and no epoch, since he belongs to all humanity and all time — the three greatest are Moses, the Great Unknown, and Paul. The first is an indistinct figure; concerning his real relation to the Hebrew people much more has been imagined than is known; but history will always regard

[1] Isa. liii., *Polychrome Bible.*

him as the great lawgiver, and always impute to him the foundations of those free institutions which the Jewish nation has given to the world. The second is still more indistinct. His name will never be known until God shall unroll the records of his servants' histories in the luminous glory of eternity. But he is of all the prophets the most majestic in his style, as the most spiritual in his message. The truth that God is one, and is a righteous God, and demands righteousness of his children, and will accept nothing less and asks for nothing more, he might have learned from Amos and Hosea and Micah and Isaiah and Jeremiah and Ezekiel; but he added what none of them saw, the truth that the sorrowing ones are the triumphant ones, that suffering love is conquering love, that sorrow is victor. Christ's life and death will illustrate and exemplify this truth. Paul, the poet philosopher of the first century, will expound and apply it. But neither literature nor life has any higher message to give to the world than the message of this prophet, who has exemplified his own doctrine of self-abnegation by leaving his writings to be bound up with those of a predecessor, while he himself remains forever unknown.

CHAPTER XVI

THE MESSAGE OF ISRAEL

MOST of us can remember, and some of us still entertain, an opinion respecting the Bible something like the following: That there were in past history some thirty or forty men who were specially inspired of God to make known to the human race the truth respecting his nature and his law — truth which was undiscoverable by human reason, but which it was necessary to know in order to future salvation;[1] that these men wrote what God told them to write, and what they thus wrote constitutes the Bible. Sometimes it was contended that they were simply amanuenses and wrote by dictation, word for word, what God directed them; sometimes, and in later times more generally, it was believed that a certain human element entered into their writing, but it was supposed that they had what is called plenary inspiration, that is, that they were inspired upon all topics on which they wrote, and that on all topics on which they wrote they were infallibly accurate. Some of a more liberal or lax faith held that this inspiration did not extend to all the topics on which they wrote, but only to the moral and religious topics; that they

[1] See, for example, Westminster *Confession of Faith*, chap. i. § 1.

might be in error in their figures, historical dates, or even scientific statements; but that in everything they said concerning the nature of God, the duties of man toward God, and the duties of men toward one another, they were infallibly accurate. Whichever of these views was taken, it was assumed that, so far as morals and religion are concerned, the Bible is an infallible standard of faith and practice, that whatever errors may have crept into it have been due to transmission, and not to original mistake on the part of the writers. The argument for this conclusion was very simple. The Bible, it is said, is the Word of God, and God is a God of truth, not of error. Into the Word of God, therefore, no errors can have crept; or if they have, it has been through human transmission, — in the original autographs there could be no error.

This view of the Bible leads into many intellectual and moral difficulties, so that to many of us it has become both intellectually and spiritually unthinkable. I do not propose to indicate those difficulties; there are enough engaged in that work; it is not necessary to duplicate their endeavors. My object in this closing chapter is to state the other and modern view, and in doing this, frankly to reaffirm that, in my judgment, between the ancient and the modern view there is a radical difference; that those of us who hold the modern view do not merely hold that there are some errors in the Bible which have crept in by transmission, nor that there are some errors in the Bible in scientific

and historical statements which are of no special consequence, nor even that here and there some errors may have crept in respecting moral and religious truth. We hold an entirely different conception of the origin, the nature, and the growth of the Bible.

In the new library building at Washington, the artist has undertaken to interpret by symbolic figures upon the interior of the dome the several functions of the great nations in the world's history. Each nation is represented by an allegorical picture with a legend underneath. The legend for Judea is "Religion;" for Greece, "Philosophy;" for Rome, "Administration;" for Germany, "Printing;" for America, "Science." The artist has perceived and interpreted a great fundamental spiritual truth — that to every nation God gives a special mission; that as the Washington Monument was built, every State contributing a stone to its erection, so the kingdom of God is built in the history of the world, every nation contributing something; that in that great development of the human race, which the scientists call evolution and the Christian calls redemption, each nation has had some part to fulfill; that in that great progress toward what political economy calls democracy and religious faith perceives to be the kingdom of God, every nation has some share.

The message of the Hebrew people appears and reappears in the Hebrew writers. The Bible is not merely an anthology of Hebrew literature. It is

not merely a collection of various messages from prophets and apostles to the church of the olden time — the Jewish — or the church of the more modern time — the Christian. It is true, these prophets were messengers to the people of Israel, but they were more than that. They were interpreters of Israel to itself. It was their function to do what is the work of the prophet in all ages, to pierce beneath the mere temporary experience, the mere mask of humanity, and discern the innermost light of the soul, which is itself the life of God, and bring it to consciousness. There was a message of Moses, and of David, and of Isaiah, and of Paul; but in all these messages, uniting them all and making them one great message, there was a message of Israel to the world, and this message of Israel to the world the Bible interprets to us.

In reading the history and literature of the Hebrew race as they are contained in the Bible the omissions appear to the thoughtful student as striking as the contributions. There is nothing indicating that the Hebrew people contributed anything whatever to art. Sculpture and painting were apparently forbidden to them, lest the paintings and the statues should become the objects of idolatrous veneration. They contributed nothing to architecture, save in the structure of a temple devoted to their religion, and that appears, from the accounts of it which have come down to us, to have been imitated from the Temple of the Egyptians. They contributed nothing to the world's music. In liter-

ature they did nothing for literature's sake, — all their literature is a vehicle for the conveyance of ethical or spiritual life. All the great controversies in the nation were religious controversies; — they fought no battles for civil liberty, they had no Kossuth, — their controversies all turned upon questions respecting the nature of God and the obligations of man toward God. They were not preëminently a spiritual people; but their life had to do almost exclusively with ethical and spiritual problems. This people, thus dealing with religion, existed as a nation for about twelve centuries, beginning with the time of Moses and ending with the time of Christ, when the organic existence of the nation came to an end, and the people were dispersed. During this time their life found its expression in their literature, as the life of all peoples finds its expression in literature. It is their life thus expressed which I have endeavored to interpret in this volume. Literature, however, does not represent primarily the common thoughts of the common people; it is the expression of the highest and best thoughts of the leaders of the people. Goethe is essentially German, but not all Germans could have written "Faust." Shakespeare is essentially English, but not all Englishmen could have written "Hamlet." The character of the people appears in their great leaders; the life of the people is represented by their great minds. Whatever may be said of the ancient Hebrews as a race, the leaders of the Hebrew people were essentially

religious. What interested them were the religious questions; and their literature, so far as it has been preserved to us, deals almost exclusively with the great religious problems — the nature of God, the nature of man, the relationship between God and man, and the way in which man can be brought into right relationships with his God. This literature constitutes the Old Testament.

The Old Testament, then, according to that modern conception which underlies this volume, is the record of the message of Israel to the world; it is the literature of a people commissioned by God to search out, receive, and communicate to the world the answer to these four questions: —

Who is God?

What is man?

What is the right relationship between God and man?

How can that right relationship be brought about?

This literature is, however, not primarily the expression of the common thought of the nation on these subjects; it is the expression of the thought of their great spiritual leaders. Often that thought is expressed in antagonism to the public sentiment; but the errors against which their leaders inveigh are not primarily political or social errors, but religious errors. Their errors and their right judgments, their beliefs and their disbeliefs, their virtues and their vices, all mark this nation as one pondering the problems of religion.

The Old Testament is the selected literature of an elect people. I say the selected literature, because there are some books written during these twelve or thirteen centuries and still extant, which are not in our Protestant Bible, and others referred to or quoted from in the Bible which have perished, and doubtless still others which have so absolutely perished that there is no reference to them whatever. What we have in the Old Testament is what in scientific terms would be called the survival of the fittest; it is those words of the great leaders of a great people on the problems of religion which had such a quality that they could survive the sifting of the centuries.

This literature is pervaded by a religious spirit. There are myths; they are the vehicle of religious truth. There are legends; they show how far back in the patriarchal age this people was pondering the problem of religion; how its very progenitor, Abraham, centuries before the nation was born, was puzzled by the question of God, and left his native land and turned his back upon all the unsatisfying idolatries that surrounded him, to see if he could find some better knowledge and some better fellowship with God than any which those idolatries furnished to him. It has folk-lore; the folk-lore shows us that the stories which the mothers told their children were pervaded by the same spirit of faith in God and of humanity to man. It has lyrics; with possibly two or three exceptions they are not love songs, nor patriotic

songs, but songs of praise to God, or of penitence because of sin against him, or of sorrow because of exile from him, or of gratitude upon return to him. It has a drama of love; this drama is for the purpose of illustrating that loyalty of love which is the foundation of the family. It has a great epic drama; this drama deals with the relation of the soul to God in time of sorrow and of doubt. It has a romantic history; not that of a great nation, not that of the heroes of a great nation, but that of the way in which God dealt with his people and the way in which his people dealt with their God. It has eloquent though fragmentary orations; they are not political or literary; they all deal with the problems of the religious life, social or individual. There is law; its foundation is in the preamble to the Hebrew constitution: "God spake all these words, saying." From the opening verse in the collection, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth," to the closing verse, "God shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children," these writings — law, history, legend, folk-lore, drama, lyrics, proverbs, oratory — have but one object, to give the answer of a divinely illuminated consciousness to the questions, Who is God? What is man? What is the right relationship between God and man? How can that right relationship be brought about?

According to one conception of the Old Testament, thirty or forty men, unique in character, aud separated from all their fellow men by their

extraordinary gifts or their extraordinary privileges, from some high and unscalable mountain top hand down to us a message, as the angel Gabriel was supposed to have handed down to Mohammed the message of God written upon sheets of silk. According to the other conception, we see a great people climbing the mountain toward God. We see them sometimes in the light, sometimes struggling through the mists and the darkness; at times wandering to the right hand or to the left, at times halting altogether or falling back discouraged; now stumbling and falling, now getting upon their feet again and pushing on; we hear the voices of their leaders, rebuking, counseling, entreating, commanding, encouraging them; their voices rebuke, counsel, entreat, command, encourage us also; and we dare to believe that where this people have climbed we too can climb, and that the God with whom they have talked on the mountain top will talk to us also, though we, too, stumble, and turn aside, and fall, and sometimes forget ourselves and our God. These are the two conceptions of the Bible. It is idle to ignore the radical difference between the two. I accept, frankly and unreservedly, the second.

The message of Israel in answer to the four great religious questions is first of all that God is one. This now seems alphabetic; but for centuries after the prophet declared, "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord!" [1] no other people

[1] Deut. vi. 4.

believed it. Philosophers occasionally held monotheism as an esoteric doctrine, but polytheism was the popular and dominant faith. Next was the message, God is Spirit. And since only spirit meets spirit, only through the spiritual can man have communion with the Eternal, therefore deity is not to be worshiped by images or pictures or physical devices of any description. This too is quite plain to those who, brought up in a Christian atmosphere, regard the worship of idols as a curious folly of the past; but it was radical, extraordinary, revolutionary in the time when the law was first proclaimed, "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image." The third element in the message of Israel was its declaration that God is a righteous God. The difference between the God of Judaism and the gods of the surrounding paganism was not a difference of names; it was not that one God was called Jehovah and the other god was called Baal. It was this: that the other religions of the world worshiped force because of fear, and this one religion worshiped righteousness because of conscience. Hence throughout the Old Testament history, until the very latest literature, there is scarcely a hint either of punishment or of reward in the life to come, scarcely so much suggestion of immortality as is to be found in the Egyptian theology, because it was the message of Israel that God is not to be worshiped for wages here or hereafter, nor to escape punishment in this life or the next; that he is a righteous God, and because

he is righteous Israel owes him reverence. The fourth element in this message was that this righteous God demands righteousness of his children. Even now Christendom has scarcely learned this lesson; when Hebrew prophets first proclaimed it the world was very slow to receive it. The object of pagan religion is rarely, I think never, to make men better; it is to show men how they can escape the wrath of the gods or how they can win the favor of the gods. But in Israel's law, with the commands "Thou shalt have no other gods before me," and "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image" are combined the great ethical principles which are the foundation of social order — respect for parents, regard for the rights of person, for the purity of the family, for property, for reputation. The religion of Israel is built on a religio-ethical basis; it is the message of Israel that righteousness is the foundation of religion and that religion is impossible dissociated from morality. And then, next in this message is an element still more radical: that this righteous God, who demands righteousness of his children, demands nothing else. Sacrifices, temple services, public and private worship, Sabbath observances, are regarded simply as the means by which we are equipped by God for practical righteousness, or by which we express our reverence for our God. The whole ceremonial system of Judaism, therefore, is a voluntary system; every sacrifice is the expression of an experience, — of gratitude, of consecration, of

penitence, of communion. This is the answer which Israel in the Old Testament makes to the question, Who is God? He is a person, a spiritual person, a righteous person, demanding righteousness of his children and demanding nothing else.

To the second question, What is man? the answer of Israel is equally explicit. "God made man in his own image:" into man God breathed his own spirit:[1] this is the fundamental faith of Israel in man, and it colors all Israel's religious experience. And this, too, was radical; for when the Hebrew nation began to learn, and as it learned to impart, its message, the image of God was looked for in the clouds, in the thunder, in the lightning, in the sea, in the land, in the mountains, in the beasts — everywhere but in men. The message of Israel transferred man's search for God from the outer world of force to the inner world of thought and feeling. "The word," that is, the speech or revelation of God, said one of the ancient prophets, "is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it."[2] The portraitures of God in the Old Testament are based on this assumption: he is a Man of War, a Shepherd, a Husband, a Father.[3] The Old Testament is often criticised for its anthropomorphic representations of God. Its anthropomorphism is its glory. For

[1] Gen. i. 27; ii. 7.

[2] Deut. xxx. 14. Compare Rom. x. 6–9.

[3] Ps. xxiv. 8; Exod. xv. 3; Ps. xxiii.; Isa. liv. 5; Jer. iii. 14; Ps. ciii. 13.

nothing that God has made is so splendid as man. The ocean? man rides the ocean. The lightning? man catches the lightning. The forest? man fells the forests. It is man with his hand on the rudder of the world, with his thoughts reaching out into the great universe beyond, with his heart of love, daring to do, to suffer, to die — it is man that is in the image of God; even in ruin he is a divine ruin. Through man God is to be seen; and God is liker to man than to anything else he has ever made:

"Thou hast made him but little lower than God,
And crownest him with glory and honor.
Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands;
Thou hast put all things under his feet." [1]

This is the answer of Israel's message to the question, What is man?

To the third question, What is the relationship between God and man, the message of Israel replies: "God is the great companion, the loving, yet terrible friend of his inmost soul, with whom he holds communion in the inmost sanctuary of his heart, to whom he turns or should turn in any hour of his adversity or happiness." [2] To Israel God is not an hypothesis to account for the phenomena of creation; not an absentee God who occasionally interferes with the world on the petition of his children.

[1] Ps. viii. 5, 6.

[2] John Cotter Morison: *The Service of Man*, page 181. The quotation is the more significant because it comes from one who is a disbeliever in revelation of any description and an agnostic as regards God.

This notion of God belongs to Baalism; Elijah overwhelms its devotees with his sarcasm: "Cry aloud, for he is a god: either he is musing, or he has gone aside, or he is on a journey, or peradventure he sleepeth and must be awaked."[1] Israel believes in a living God; a God who is in his world of nature and his world of men — a lawgiver with Moses, an architect with Bezaleel, a soldier with Joshua, a singer with David, a preacher with Amos, a statesman with Isaiah: — in all men, not merely in these thirty or forty men; in all time, not merely in these twelve or fourteen centuries; in all the world, not merely in this little province. It is not the message of Israel that God was once in his world, once gave law to Moses, once inspired Joshua with courage, once brooded David with song, once visited Isaiah in the temple and Ezekiel in the desert; it is that God is in his world, new creating in every spring, ruling over every storm, giving his law to all consciences, inspiring all heroic souls to valiant deeds, singing in every singer of pure and lofty verse, revealing himself to every prophet of his righteousness and his love.

To the fourth question, How can the right relationship be brought about between God and men, the Hebrew message is not less explicit. It is terribly clear in its enunciation that such right relationship does not now exist. It declares that God is of purer eyes than to see iniquity; that he cannot and will not suffer it; and that man is

[1] 1 Kings xviii. 27.

iniquitous, deliberately, willfully, continuously, habitually so.[1] But it also plainly shows what is necessary to deliver man from this sin, to remove and destroy this obstacle between the soul and God, and to make them truly one in the unity of a mutual love. It declares that God can never accept a lower standard than that of perfect, divine righteousness, but that if man accepts this standard and sincerely and earnestly endeavors to make it his own, no other condition of comradeship is required; that God desires this comradeship with man, longs for it, is eager for it, but that it is possible only as man reconciles himself with God by abandoning his sin, by accepting God's law and loyally obeying it, by accepting God's love and loyally responding to it. He has simply to seek God, to call upon him, to forsake his wicked ways and his unrighteous thoughts and return to the Lord, and the Lord will have mercy upon him and will abundantly pardon. His past sins need not prevent; for God will blot them out as a thick cloud is blotted out by the sun; he will cast them into the depths of the sea; though they were as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they were red as crimson, they shall be as wool.[2] No sacrifice is necessary to propitiate God, or to turn away his wrath or win his favor. Sacrifice is only the human

[1] For a summary of the Old Testament indictment of man see Paul's quotations gathered from various Old Testament writings and contained in Romans iii. 10–18.

[2] Isa. xliv. 22; Micah vii. 19; Isa. i. 18.

expression of penitence, consecration, thanksgiving. It is only a symbolical witness that to destroy sin costs much; that sin is not a light matter to be easily dismissed and readily forgotten. But God, though he accepts sacrifice as man's expression of loyalty and love, does not require it. He requires only that the penitent cease to do evil and learn to do well, that he begin forthwith to do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly in fellowship with his God.[1] For God is more than a righteous God; he is a pitying God; he is "great in mercy;" he is "long-suffering;" he not only demands righteousness, he helps to righteousness all who wish to be righteous; he not only forgives sin, he destroys it, and he leads the forgiven sinner in the paths of righteousness.[2]

This is the message of Israel to the world: that God is a righteous person, who demands righteousness of his people and demands nothing else; that man is of kin with God; that the relationship between God and man is one of comradeship; that to enter into that comradeship man must desire it and endeavor to conform his life to it; and that if he does so desire and so endeavor he may be assured of God's readiness to receive and to help him. But Israel does not understand his message at first. In the Old Testament we see him gradually learning the message which in time he is to give to the

[1] Micah vi. 6–8.

[2] Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7; Num. xiv. 18; 2 Chron. xxx. 9; Ps. xxiii. 3; lxxxv. 2; lxxxvi. 5, 15; ciii. 8; cxlv. 8, 9.

world. First he conceives of Jehovah as one God among many gods, but superior to them all, — "no other god like unto thee;" as a provincial God who dwells in Jerusalem and rules in Palestine, but not in Egypt or in Babylon; only gradually does Israel learn that Jehovah is God alone, and all the gods of the heathen are what Jeremiah calls them, — "*not*-gods." At first Israel thinks of him as a just Judge who cannot endure the wicked, who will destroy them, and who commissions Israel to destroy them. Only very gradually does Israel learn that there is a higher justice than that which destroys, that mercy is not incongruous with justice, that the highest righteousness is not that which destroys men, but that which transforms them. At first he thinks of God's love as confined to Israel; Israel alone is of kin to God; the heathen are outcasts, of a different blood, of a different spirit; not until the captivity does he learn that God cares for pagans also, that he will have mercy on Nineveh if it repents, that he will call Cyrus the Persian to be his minister. At first humanity appears to Israel to be required only toward Israelites; the Jew must not permanently enslave a Jew, but may so enslave a pagan; he must not take usury of a Jew, but may of a pagan; he must not eat unclean meats, but may reserve them for the stranger in the land;[1] not until later does he learn that he is to do justly toward all men, and

[1] Exod. xx. 1, 2; Deut. xv. 12–18; Lev. xxv. 45, 46; Deut. xxiii. 19, 20; xiv. 21.

exercise mercy for all. At first he conceives of his relationship to God as that of a soldier to his commander-in-chief, or that of a subject to his king; obedience by a dogged resolution to an external law is his highest conception of religion; not until later does religion grow to be divine comradeship, and obedience the conformity of character to character, not of conduct to statute laws. At first he imagines that Jehovah must be propitiated by sacrifices; for a long time the two conceptions, that of the pagans that God must be appeased by sacrifices, and that of the prophets that God is himself self-sacrificing, struggle for the mastery; it is not until the time of the Great Unknown that the idea becomes clear, even to the mind of the most spiritual, that it is by his own suffering the Servant of Jehovah will redeem Israel; that the sacrifice is not for God, but for the people; that God himself takes the burdens, the sorrows, and the sins of his people on himself. This is the Old Testament; the literature of an ancient people commissioned first to learn, then by the very process of their learning to teach the world, that God is a righteous person, that man is his child, that the relationship between the two is one of comradeship, that to enter into this comradeship nothing is necessary but to accept God's love and loyally give him our love in return.

And yet in all his history Israel is seen expectant of a clearer understanding: he is seen in quest of his message; he is seen with his face toward the

future looking for a clearer disclosure of the light and a larger endowment of the life. The prophets prophesy in part; the message is given in fragments, — "by divers portions and in divers manners," as says one of the New Testament interpreters of this message.[1] Moses is reported as asking to see the glory of God; Gideon as doubting if Jehovah is indeed with his people; Job as questioning if he is a righteous God, and if so why life is so full of undeserved and seemingly unjust suffering; the Psalmist as seeking for him as the thirsty hart panteth for the water brooks; even the Great Unknown as longing for him to rend the heavens and come down and manifest himself.[2] In the earliest traditions of this people their God is represented as putting enmity between man and the powers of evil; as warning man that those powers will poison humanity, but also as promising man that humanity will at last utterly destroy them. In the successive calls to Israel to engage in this battle of the ages, Israel has the pledge and the promise of his Father's help and the assurance through his Father's help of final victory. In the first revelation of himself to Moses he appears as a Deliverer, as one who has seen the burdens of his people, has made them his own, and is coming to them to set them free.[3] From this birthday of

[1] Heb. i. 1, Rev. Ver.

[2] Exod. xxxiii. 18; Judg. vi. 13; Job ix. 21-24; Ps. xlii. 1; Isa. lxiv. 1, 2.

[3] "The Mosaic conception of God . . . is a conception of God

the nation it is the constant burden of the prophets that is intimated to him that One is coming to Israel, — described sometimes as a prophet, sometimes as a king, sometimes as a shepherd, sometimes as a princely priest, sometimes as a suffering servant of the Lord, — who will as a prophet interpret God to them, as a king show them the full meaning of the divine law, as a priest bring them back to the God they have forsaken, as a shepherd enfold and feed and protect them, and as a suffering servant of the Lord bear the burdens of their sins with them and for them.[1] Those who accept his message, are loyal to his law, and share both his burdens and their own with him, he will lead to victory. And when that victory is won, the evils which sin has brought into the world will disappear from the world: wars will cease; pestilence and disease will abate; death itself will be conquered; love and life will reign.[2]

the Deliverer." *Ancient Ideals*, by H. O. Taylor, vol. ii. 102. "The fundamental thought (of Mosaism) should rather be said to centre exclusively in the knowledge of the true Deliverer. . . . In this sense that ancient Mosaic age includes within it the Messianic, that is, the Christian, not as comprehended by distinct consciousness or direct effort, but as realized through the inherent germinating force of the fundamental idea, which here arose, and in its own time necessarily led to it." *History of Israel*, by Heinrich Ewald, vol. ii. pp. 109, 113. The whole section (ii.) on the Development and Maturity of the Theocracy under Moses and Joshua is of the highest interpretative value.

[1] Deut. xviii. 15; Ps. lxxii.; cx. 4; Ezek. xxxiv. 23; Zech. vi. 12; Isa. liii.

[2] Isa. ii. 1–4 ix. 1–7; xi. 1–9; lx.; lxi.; Hos. xiii. 14; Zech. xiv. 11.

Two or three centuries passed away after the last contribution of any note had been made to the unique literature of this Hebrew people. During those two or three centuries no new lawgiver interpreted the divine law, no new poet sang of the divine love, no new prophet spoke of man's duty or God's grace. Then a new prophet appeared in Palestine. His life was brief and uneventful; his message was a continuation of the message of Israel, but to it he gave a new significance. He taught that God is righteous and demands righteousness of his children, and demands nothing else; but to righteousness he gave a clearer meaning, if not a new interpretation. He taught that God is a Father who cares for men, cares for the little children, cares even for the insignificant sparrows. He taught that righteousness in man must be more than obedience to a righteous law; it must be spontaneous; must spring from the heart; must include reverence in spirit, chastity in thought, meekness and lowliness of mind, the peace-loving and peace-making disposition, the nature which loves and prays for one's enemies. He taught that God will help men to this spirit if they desire it, that he is more ready to give his own spirit of love to those that ask for it than fathers are to give bread to their children when they are hungry, that the spirit of righteousness, that is, of love, can be had by any who seek for it. He told his race that the kingdom of heaven, long promised and long expected, was not afar off, that it was close at

hand; it was no other than the spirit of obedience and fidelity, of loyalty and love to God, and service of men, and that it could only grow gradually and despite much opposition. His teaching was illustrated by his life. He seemed utterly careless of the things for which men generally are most eager, — wealth, fame, social position, power. He lived wholly for others. The contradictions of his character constitute an enigma which the world has never been weary of studying: his fearlessness in defending others, and his meekness when assailed himself; his quiet assumption of authority over his followers, and his absolute self-abnegation; his purity of life, and his understanding of and sympathy with every form of sin; his unassailable dignity and his approachableness; his disregard of the conventions and ceremonies of religion, and his transparent devoutness of spirit; his humility and his challenge to his enemies to search the record of his life for a flaw; his reverence and the familiarity of his intercourse with God; his joyousness and his participation in the sins and sorrows of the world.[1] The leaders of his time arrayed themselves against him as an iconoclast; the people regarded him with admiration as a prophet; his immediate followers believed that he was the One of whom the ancient prophets had spoken as he that was to come and bring with him a new and divine life to the world.

[1] See, for an admirable presentation of this contrariety of character in Christ, chapter x. in *Nature and the Supernatural*, by Horace Bushnell.

After his death they recalled and recorded his first sermon, in which he had declared that he had come to fulfill those ancient prophecies; his private conversations with them, in which he had indicated still more clearly this as his mission; the trial scene before the Jewish Sanhedrim, in which, put upon the stand and under oath, he had affirmed that he was the expected Messiah; the trial scene before the Roman procurator, in which he had affirmed that he was a king, and had come to establish a kingdom on the earth, not by force of arms, but by force of truth. His death disheartened and scattered his followers; but their faith in his resurrection gave them new courage and a new understanding of him and his mission. Since that time, and apparently due to his influence, a new life has appeared in the world. He contributed nothing to architecture, yet there are no such noble monuments as those built to his memory; nothing to song, yet his inspiration has created a new order of music; nothing to art, yet his spirit has permeated most of modern art; nothing to literature, yet no one teacher has created so profound an influence on literature as he has exerted; he promulgated no laws and instituted no reforms, yet where the story of his life and death has gone, slavery has been abolished, government has grown more just, war has been ameliorated, education has become general, and in some communities practically universal, and the home has been recreated; he taught no creed, formulated no ritual, and organized no

church, but his influence on religious philosophy has far transcended that of the greatest of ancient philosophers, and his name is mingled with that of his Father in the prayers and praises of the great liturgies of Christendom, and scores of ecclesiastical organizations claim the authority of his name. More than all, his influence has almost created the virtues of meekness, gentleness, and forbearance, and taught the world how to unite them with those of sturdiness, courage, and energy. If he is not the prophet whom Moses foretold, he has done more than all other prophets to interpret the divine nature to man; if he is not the king whom the unknown author of the Seventy-second Psalm anticipated, his spirit has done more than that of all other lawgivers combined to imbue law with a new and humane spirit; if he is not the shepherd whom Ezekiel foresaw, he has done more than all other shepherds to protect and enrich the life of man; if he is not the princely priest whom Zechariah saw, he has done more than all other priests to bring humanity back to God; if he is not the suffering servant of whom the Great Unknown had a mystical vision, his life and death have given to suffering a new and glorious significance.

This is not the place to answer the questions here barely suggested. Yet I cannot close this volume in the life and literature of the ancient Hebrews without saying that I do not see how any one can accept the general interpretation of that life and literature here given, and not see in Jesus of

Nazareth the fulfillment of Israel's aspirations; not see, at least, that he more than any other of the sons of men, more, I will say, than all the other sons of men, gives answer to the four great questions of religion: his god-like character answers the question, Who is God; his simple, spontaneous, earnest and radiant life answers the question, What should man be; his unity with the Father interprets that ideal comradeship between the spirit of man and the spirit of God which should be the goal of all life; his passion tells us what we who possess any measure of that comradeship are to do that we may impart the divine life to others.

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The Riverside Press
Electrotyped and printed by H. O. Houghton & Co.
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